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IMPRESSIONS AND EXPERIENCES  
OF THE  
WEST INDIES AND NORTH AMERICA  
IN 1849

BY  
ROBERT BAIRD, A.M.

*“Cœlum non animum mutant qui trans mare currunt.”*

VOL. I.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS  
EDINBURGH AND LONDON  
MDCCCL

PRINTED BY WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS, EDINBURGH.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY,

JAMES MACAULAY HIGGINSON,

GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

IN AND OVER THE ISLANDS OF

ANTIGUA, MOUNTSERRAT, BARBUDA, SAINT CHRISTOPHER, NEVIS,

ANGUILLA, DOMINICA, AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS,

*This Work,*

THE RESULT OF NOTES COMMENCED WHEN ENJOYING HIS SOCIETY

AND HOSPITALITY IN GOVERNMENT HOUSE, ANTIGUA,

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

BY HIS OBLIGED FRIEND,

THE AUTHOR.



## P R E F A C E

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“ I'll publish, right or wrong ! ”—BYRON

To be last written, and least read, is the fate of the generality of prefaces. In a chapter which belongs to a literary family, of which such a remark may, with much truth, be made, length were a fault, brevity an excellence. My Preface to the following “ Impressions and Experiences ” will therefore be very short, consisting of little more than the acknowledgment that, if the attempt to delineate life, manners, and scenery in the West Indies, and in America, should unfortunately prove unworthy of any share of public estimation, there is no one responsible or amenable for them, or for their publication, save myself : for although the urgency of friends, and

even of friends of some name in literary life, has certainly not been wanting to induce me to “see my name in print,” I have not such confidence in Byron’s attendant dictum, “A book’s a book, although there’s nothing in’t,” which would have induced me to publish, however strongly importuned, had it not been for the opinion entertained by myself, that I would succeed in making my Work instructive or amusing, or perchance both. So far, therefore, from being entitled to disarm criticism by pleading, in defence of publication, a compliance with the solicitation of others, I am bound in truth to declare, that my chief motive for giving this Work to the press, is the hope, that a perusal of my “Impressions and Experiences,” in the course of a voyage not very frequently undertaken, will prove pleasant to many, and profitable to a few—and, more particularly, to those who may, like myself, be advised or induced to visit the West Indian Archipelago under medical advice. Add to this that I have not been able to find, among more recent publications, one which professes to give anything approaching to what I would call a domestic portraiture of the Islands and Islanders of the West Indian Archipelago, in their present state or condition. No doubt Mr Coleridge’s



spirited little volume, published first in 1826, is somewhat of this character ; but Mr Coleridge's visit to the Islands of the West Indies was made in 1825, ere steam had wrought its marvels—and, moreover, his visit was confined to a very few of the Islands. Not only so—Mr Coleridge's narratives, graphic and amusing as they are, have but little application to the present condition of West Indian society. They were written with exclusive reference to a state of slavery ; and they are written in a strain of enthusiastic description which, eloquent and in the main accurate as they undoubtedly are, has caused them to be regarded, in the eyes of many, as extravagant, if not incredible. In such and similar considerations has originated my desire to publish this Work ; and I think I shall have exhausted my confessions on this subject, when I add, that I am certainly not a little influenced by a desire to repay, in part, a debt of gratitude I owe to my many dear friends, not only in the West Indies and in Canada, but in the

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

by adding my tribute to the many beauties of that land, and the many excellencies of its inhabitants ; and, by simply speaking of both as I

found them, increase, if I can, even by a little, between two great nations, identified in origin, in language, and in duty, that mutual knowledge of each other, the progress of which is doing so much to promote the cause of peace and civilisation.

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# THE WEST INDIES

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## CHAPTER I.

### EXPLANATORY AND INTRODUCTORY.

“ Utinam tam facile vera invenire quam falsa convincere.”  
TULLY.

IT is not because it is imagined that it is a circumstance of the slightest consequence in itself, or one likely to affect, in any way, the reception which this book may receive at the hands of that august and numerous body whom it is customary to designate “a liberal public,” that I set out with the mention of these two facts—*First*, That the journeyings which have given cause to these notes were undertaken solely on account, or in pursuit of health; and, *Second*, That, in selecting the West India Islands as my place of temporary sojourn, I was not influenced by any considerations of business or by any ties of connexion.

To these islands I went solely because, after medical consultations, numerous and erudite, it was supposed that the climate of these

“ Beautiful islands ! where the green  
Which Nature wears was never seen  
'Neath zone of Europe ; where the hue  
Of sea and heaven is such a blue  
As England dreams not ; where the night  
Is all irradiate with the light  
Of starlike moons, which, hung on high,  
Breathe and quiver in the sky,”

was likely to have a salutary and a sanitary effect on the disease or diseases under which my corporal frame was supposed to labour ! And I took the westerly route readily, because, as the resident of a city deeply interested in colonial matters, I had for a long time heard and read much of West India distress, without being able to arrive at very definite or tangible notions as to its nature, causes, or extent.

But, if the mention of these facts be not important to the success of the book, “ Why,” the reader may ask, “ am I treated or troubled with these personalities at all ? ” The question, good reader, is a fair one, and will be honestly answered. I have no interest in recording the facts, but you have an interest in knowing them, and a right to know them. You have honoured me so far as to commence the perusal of my work, (whether you intend to finish it or not is another question entirely ; ) and, without prying into matters which concern only your bookseller and yourself, I take it for granted that you have paid for the privilege of perusal, such as it is. You have therefore a

right to know everything that can throw light upon the bias or honesty under or with which my book has been penned. Now, it is well known that the object for which a man sees, or goes to see, will greatly affect the medium through which he sees, and the lights under which he afterwards represents the objects seen. Of no part of the globe does this more truly hold good than of the British colonial possessions in the West Indies. Therefore it is that I have deemed it right thus, in the outset, to chronicle the fact that, in my voyagings to the West, I went neither as a friend of slavery nor as an emancipationist; I journeyed neither as a Protectionist, nor as a Ministerialist, nor as a Free-trader.

The route undertaken and accomplished was from England to Barbadoes, by way of Madcira, and thence, in a north-west direction, through the numerous English, French, Danish, and Spanish islands of the West Indian Archipelago. Thereafter from Cuba across the Gulf of Mexico to Mobile and New Orleans, up the Mississippi and the Ohio to Cincinnati, northward to the great American lakes into Canada—and from Canada, by the Hudson river, to New York and the other great cities of the American Union. Any more minute detail of the lines of travel has been rendered unnecessary by the note of contents prefixed to each chapter, for the guidance and convenience of the reader.

I have only to add that, throughout, it has been my main object to vindicate the humble title I have

selected for my book, by chronicling incidents exactly as they occurred, and things precisely as they are ; and, whatever reception my descriptions may meet with, I have received from them much pleasure in the minute record kept by me of my daily experiences, and in the excerpting from these copious though rough notes, such portions of them as I have thought worthy of the honour, and likely to excite attention and create interest in the minds of general readers.



## CHAPTER II.

“ Adieu ! adieu ! my native shore  
Fades o’er the waters blue.”—BYRON.

“ Ille robur et æs triplex  
Circa pectus erat, qui fragilem truci  
Commisit pelago ratem.”—HORACE.

LEAVING HOME—LEAVING ENGLAND—SOUTHAMPTON AND BAY—SEA  
VOYAGES—AT SEA—FELLOW-PASSENGERS—MAKING LAND—PORTO  
SANTO—MADEIRA—TROPICS AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS—BARBA-  
DOES—TROPICAL SCENERY.

IN one of the above mottoes, the Augustan poet has chronicled, in immortal verse, the hardihood of the most “ancient mariner.” But, whatever the courage of the sailor who first committed a frail bark to any sea ; or, whatever the courage of the great Columbus, who, anticipating Columbia over the distant wave, first stretched his sails to cross the broad Atlantic in search of a New World ; I fear steam and its triumphs have destroyed, for the modern traveller, all claims to any unwonted degree of courage, when he intrusts his person to the tender mercies of the uncertain sea. Such, at least, were my “impressions and experi-

ences," ere I had been a week on board the noble steam-ship the Great Western. At first, like all landsmen, I found myself not merely cabined, (*that* I had bargained as well as paid for,) but "cabined, cribbed, and confined," in the six or eight feet square, facetiously denominated a "state room." *Lucus a non lucendo*. Like those of many other persons, my notions of steam-ship accommodation had been somewhat formed from the pictorial representations exhibited in agents' offices, and from the highly coloured pictures of the comforts of a life at sea drawn by experienced voyagers, who, having frequently made the voyage, had lost their sense of the disagreeables in their appreciation of the beauties which it opened to their view, and in the health which it imparted to their frame. But it was only at first that the dispelling of the delusion left a feeling of disappointment. Ere Porto Santo was announced to be in sight, (although nothing more than a seeming cloud was at first visible,) I had become perfectly reconciled to my cabin home, and quite prepared to vindicate its spaciousness, salubrity, and convenience, against the sneers of any Exquisite who might erroneously imagine an extensive bedroom and separate dressing-closet among the essentials of human happiness. But to begin at the beginning.

It was on a miserably wet cold morning, in the very beginning of the month of January 1849, that, after bidding a fond farewell to those near and dear to me, I started from the commercial metropolis of

Scotland, per rail, to London. My spirits were in keeping with the weather. Indeed, I envy not the man who, whatever his prospects of enjoyment may be, can leave his native land and a happy home for a far-off country, without deep and painful feelings of reluctance and regret. When, therefore, I started on my journeyings, I was not much in the vein for "pencilings by the way;" and, even had it been otherwise, the journey from Glasgow to London is too well known, and (thanks to the excellence of our railways) too rapidly travelled, to require, or indeed to justify, any descriptive remarks other than those of the Guide Books. The only thing that occurs to me to note, is the rapidity with which the transit is now effected. Eleven o'clock at night found me in London, having travelled the four hundred and twenty miles, or thereby, in twelve and a half hours. Similar remarks apply to the journey from London to Southampton, performed on the afternoon of the immediately succeeding day. At the end of this trip, I bade farewell, for a time, to English railways, not then knowing, that notwithstanding all the vaunting of our Transatlantic friends, I was not to see anything of the kind—anything like them, or half so good, so swift, so comfortable, or so safe—till I should again put foot in Old England. At Southampton I sojourned at the Dolphin Hotel; and as I perceive it is the good custom of more experienced tourists to record, for the guidance and benefit of their "successors in office," the hostelries in which comforts and condiments are to be found, I here pledge my

veracity to the fact that the Dolphin Hotel in Southampton—albeit that, during my sojourn there, the weather was bitterly cold, and that the house is more adapted for a summer than a winter residence—is a hostelry of exeeeding comfort and excellent cooking. In Southampton and the neighbourhood are to be seen various objects and institutions of interest and attraction, which will amply repay a visit ; but, as they are fully chronicled in Mr Osborne's book, and in other Guide Books, and as my stay in Southampton was but brief, I will leave those to other pens, and proceed at once on board the good ship Great Western, which was to convey me to Madeira, *en route* for the West Indies. The Great Western lay out at anchor in the middle of the arm of the sea, termed (on the same *lucus a non lucendo* principle) Southampton river ; and we reached it by a miserable small steamer, which conveyed the passengers, with the small luggage of the general body and the whole luggage of the favoured few, on board *The Ship*—the heavier luggage of those not in the secret having been sent before, *at their expense*, in sailing boats, after they had been again and again told that, on no aecount whatever, would heavy luggage be permitted on board the Tender steam-boat. But this is not the only instance in which I have found alleged impossibilities give way before favouritism or influence.

I was accompanied on board by two good friends, who had kindly resolved not to part from me till the last. The day was cold and wet, and the sea rough.

The cabin of the small steam-boat could not contain the one-fourth of our number. We formed, friends included, a party greatly exceeding a hundred; and, being enshrouded in a multifarious variety of pea-jackets, cloaks, and waterproofs, we formed a group so unpicturesque and unattractive, that it is only from a vivid recollection of the superior claims, in these respects, of the larger world we found on board the Great Western, that I waive description of the minor scene, and proceed to the larger one. On reaching the steamship, we encountered a scene of confusion which almost baffles description. Passengers of every variety of tongue, dressed in costume of every variety of colour, with hats of all imaginable shapes, colours, and kinds—running about in every direction, and poking their heads into places where they had no business to be, in their attempts to secure preferences of convenience for themselves, and to vindicate possession of their luggage: to this add the noises of the live stock, the tramlings and callings attending the getting in of the cargo and getting the ship ready for sea, and you may have, reader, some idea of the confusion which attends the getting underweigh for a foreign voyage. After a hasty but handsome luncheon, which was on the saloon table when we went on board, and to which we were invited by the national strain “The roast beef of Old England,” our friends said the unwelcome “farewell,” and left us to our meditations, as the noble ship, like a thing of life, panted forth upon her voyage. Mine were dull enough, and I am

not ashamed to acknowledge that they were so. But I was roused from them by a somewhat ludicrous incident, which, even at the risk of having my wisdom impugned, I shall here record, were it only for the warning of such travellers as may peruse my book, and contemplate a similar trip. Like most persons, save the few who prefer ship-board to *terra firma*, and think "state rooms" quite roomy and airy, I thought the closet, which was to be my abode probably for the next three weeks, or perchance longer, was somewhat dark, and had somewhat of a close and confined odour. To remedy this I had opened the port-hole; and having done so, and seen my luggage deposited within, I had locked the door and taken the key with me, to prevent any interference with my "personals," till after the ship should sail. Thereafter, and when my friends had left me, I lay down on a sofa in the afterpart of the saloon. There, exhausted by my feelings, and the turmoil of the day, I fell asleep, and did not waken for some hours, or till the pitching of the vessel, after she had passed the "Needles," roused me effectually. Then I sought my so-called berth, in every way prepared to acknowledge that, in the state I felt myself approaching to, the recumbent position was the most natural, if not the most necessary. But, alas! the same sea which aroused me from my slumbers, had washed through the open port of my state-room, saturated my bed and bed-clothes, and had sent the different articles of my apparelling to intricate corners of the confined space. Occurring, as this did, on a wet night, at ten

o'clock, and when starting in a somewhat invalided state on a long voyage, it was unpleasant enough. But the necessities of the case roused me from my melancholy musings, better, probably, than more comfortable circumstances would have done; and, notwithstanding the first declaration of the steward-assistant, that, the vessel being full, there were no more spare mattresses or bed-clothes to be had that night, I succeeded in a few hours, by the exercise of persuasion and the influence of a somewhat more potent power, in having things put to rights, and retired to rest—agreeably surprised to find that, although the pitching of the ship had increased, my incipient tendency to sea-sickness had nearly disappeared. This, however, is not the only instance in which I have found that over-exertion was the best cure for the *malade du mer*.

When mentioning the stewards of the ship, I deem it not out of place, and likely to be useful, to mention here the fact that, on the occasion of this voyage, formal and written complaint was made by the passengers of the inattention and inefficiency of the stewards, particularly at the outset of the voyage; and this I think a matter peculiarly worthy the attention of this West Indian Steam-Packet Company. For many and obvious reasons, some of which will appear in the course of my narration, this is a route which is likely to become a favourite one for and with invalids. At all events it will probably become so, if proper attention is paid to their comfort and safety during and for the voyage. The advantages of sea voyages for the

cure of dyspeptics, and the beneficial results likely to accrue from such voyages in the incipient stages of pulmonary complaints, are beginning to attract much more attention than had been given to them formerly; and the advantages of a West Indian voyage, now that steam has made its direction and duration matters of certainty, consists mainly in this—that the medical adviser, who recommends it as a sanitary measure, can calculate on his patient being in the midst of bright skies and balmy breezes within five or six days after leaving England, and this whatever may be the period of the year at which the voyage is adventured on. But the transition from the conveniences and comforts usually possessed by an invalid at home, to the capabilities of the six or eight feet square called a state room on board a ship, is, under any circumstances, a great and a harsh one. So great and so harsh that, unless preventive measures can be taken, there is some chance of the debilitated patient suffering more injury from the confinement, damp, and closeness of the ship, than he or she reaps benefit from the improvement of the climate. This is so plainly true, and so oft confirmed by melancholy experience, that argument to prove it were a mere waste of time; and it is also true, and obviously true, that it is at the outset of a sea voyage that the invalid traveller, and indeed any traveller, is most alive to the discomforts of a ship, and is consequently most likely to be benefited by some degree of extra attention. It is however to be feared, that these facts sometimes escape the attention



of steam-boat directors ; and, most assuredly, the written complaints of the inattention of the servants, made on the occasion of this voyage, were not without foundation. In every other respect, and particularly as regards the politeness and consideration evinced by the captain and officers, no complaint could be made, and no complaint was made. But as regards the servants, and particularly at the outset of the voyage, the attendance and attention were anything but satisfactory. I say at the outset, because, while it was then that consideration and attention were most required, and would have been most appreciated by the passengers, it was then that the want of it was most displayed : the reason of this being, as I was afterwards informed, that the majority of the steward's assistants had been engaged only a few days before the sailing of the ship ; so that, at the commencement of the voyage, they were comparatively new to their work, to each other, and to the steamer. This, however, is plainly an explanation, not a justification ; and it is only now mentioned, because it was the excuse communicated to my fellow-passengers and to myself. It is sufficiently obvious that arrangements might be made for the attendance of a sufficient corps of stewards to accompany each successive ship on several voyages.

“ That man is to be pitied,” says Mr Turner in his annual tour for 1844, “ who has never sailed from Southampton to Havre de Grace ;” and although I cannot carry my feelings of commiseration so far as

to embrace all mankind, save such as are not included in Mr Turner's remark, I can safely affirm, that he or she who has not sailed from Southampton on a foreign voyage has something to see of the beauties of Old England. Comparatively disadvantageous as was the day when I sailed past and away from the Isle of Wight—an island with much justice called the “Garden of England”—I could not fail to observe the many elements of beauty which the scene possesses; or to perceive that, on a fine clear day, and under the influence of a summer sun, it must in every way merit the character of being a scene calculated to “rejoice the gay, soothe the melancholy, and even warm the indifferent.”

On reaching deck next morning, I found myself, I may almost say for the first time in my life (a Channel voyage having been the extent of my previous experience) “at sea.” Before, behind, around, the heavens and earth were only separated by the line of the natural horizon, and the ship in which I was formed the centre of the visible world.

It has been often enough remarked, that a sea voyage affords but few events or incidents to chronicle, for the interest of the general reader; and this one certainly formed no exception to the rule. “Sometimes we see a ship, sometimes we ship a sea;” while occasionally the announcement of a ship in sight caused a very unusual degree of excitement among the passengers who might happen to be on deck—all and each left their perusal of Macaulay's *History of Eng-*

*land*, (then recently published, and of which, to the credit of the party, we had at least some dozen copies on board and in much request,) and their various occupations. Telescopes were had on requisition, and the utmost anxiety was displayed to ascertain the important facts of whether the vessel was the "Maria" or the "Janet," the "Ruby" or the "Pearl"—was laden with "fruit" or with "timber"—was bound for London or Liverpool. Such occasional occurrences, with the somewhat amusing occupation (to those who, like myself, had overcome the demon of sea-sickness at an early period of the voyage) of observing the gradual increase in the number of promenaders on deck, and the gradual improvement in the external appearance of each, generally supply sufficient excitement for the first few days after the vessel gets to sea.

As seen when, or soon after, the ship leaves the port of departure, one's fellow-passengers generally appear under a very monotonous, and perhaps not very inviting aspect; and literally, as well as figuratively, it may be said that it is not for some days that the various members constituting the "living freight" appear under their proper *colours*.

As regards my fellow-voyagers, on the occasion in question, I am bound to acknowledge that I was peculiarly fortunate. For although their number exceeded a hundred, and although there was among so many as great a variety of minds and of manner as there unquestionably, as well as amusingly, was of hats, caps, coats, and mustaches—(strange that so many

Englishmen, when going abroad, should think of disfiguring their physiognomies with the unnational mustache)—there were none among their number of peculiarly ill-regulated minds or offensive habits; and there were several among them of whose elegance, talents, and general acceptability, I shall ever retain a most grateful recollection. Having always regarded the unauthorised introduction of individual names, and of scenes of private life, into narratives of travel, as an act much to be reprobated, it were a violation of my own views of propriety were I here to mention the names of any of my fellow-voyagers. But, without the chance of offending even the most fastidious feelings of any of them, (should this work come under their observation,) I may mention that, in the persons of a governor going to his seat of government, and his lady—of a British consul and his graceful daughter—of a retired cavalry officer, now, alas! no more—of an accomplished and enthusiastic West Indian planter and proprietor—of a talented doctor, of fame as a writer on the important subject of tropical agriculture—and of some other gentlemen of varied talents and occupations—I found as pleasant a party, for morning promenading and evening amusements, as I ever expect to find for, or in the course of, a voyage across the broad Atlantic. Here, as on all other occasions, I found that a desire to please, and to be pleased, was a valuable preventive of tedium and ennui.

It was not till the forenoon of the seventh day after

leaving Southampton that we came in sight of the island of Porto Santo, which forms the most northerly of the group constituting the Madeiras. I was peculiarly struck with two circumstances attending our doing so. In the first place, the precision and certainty of steam-navigation properly conducted. On the day previous, I had been told by the first officer of the ship that we would see Porto Santo at a particular hour of the following day, and the time of first seeing it was within a quarter of an hour of the time he had mentioned. Again, when first seen from the ship, the land of Porto Santo lay so clearly in front that it seemed that, had the vessel held straight on her course, she would have struck nearly about midway on the northern coast of the island. While, on calculating the ship's position by the different chronometers, and by dead reckoning, there were not above two or three miles of difference between the extremes of the whole. This surely is as singular as it is satisfactory.

But the next subject of my remark is one more certain to attract the attention of other travellers by sea—it being the singular appearance of land when first seen, and the refreshing and inspiring sensations which the sight inspires. When land is announced from the mast-head, even to the most experienced eye all seems but one expanse of sea and sky, bathed, it may be, (as it was in the case I write of,) in the rays of an almost tropical sun. Shortly a cloud, or uneven darkness, gathers on the boundary of the ocean,

occasionally moving, or seeming to move, or sometimes disappearing altogether. In a few minutes the darkness becomes more dense, and after the paddle-wheels have made a few hundred more revolutions, the seeming cloud settles, and becomes permanent and defined. Heights and hollows first appear; then colours develop themselves; and at last the traveller is voyaging with the first sight of foreign land in view. In my case, this first seen land was the island of Porto Santo, only interesting from its forming one of the Madeiras.

Was Madeira known to the ancients? is a question much more easily asked than answered, and one which, in my case, formed the subject of a good deal of amusing discussion, among the pleasant party assembled on board the Great Western on the voyage in question. The discussion, however, was carried on more for the sake of seeing what could be said on the affirmative of the question than for any other reason; for I fear that there is but little direct evidence of any kind tending to encourage the idea that this beautiful group, composed of Madeira, Porto Santo, and the Deserters, (query “deserted,”) however appositely situated for discovery by the Carthaginians and other voyagers of ancient times, were revealed to the world until their discovery by a long-named Portuguese in 1419. There is a story of their prior discovery by an Englishman named Mackin, and, were the position defensible, one’s *amor patriæ* might dispose him to maintain the truth of this statement.

But the now universal conviction is, that it is wholly fabulous, and that Portugal has the honour of giving birth to the discoverer of these balmy islands—this *flor d'oceano*, as the Portuguese themselves term the chief island of the group. If, however, the island of Madeira did not form the *insula fortunata* of the ancient world—if that honour is to be given either to one of the Canaries or to one of the Azores—it surely was because Madeira was unknown. For, if half that has been written of it be true, there is much justice in the remark of the enthusiastic Coleridge, that “if the ancients had known Madeira, it would have been their *plusquam fortunata insula*; and the blessed spirits of the Gentiles, after a millennium of probationary enjoyment in the Canaries, would have been translated thither to live for ever on nectar and oranges.”

The existence of a quarantine, on account of the then prevalence of cholera in England, prevented our landing at Madeira. Although, therefore, we lay in the Bay of Funchal for nearly twenty-four hours, I am prevented from saying more of this Island of the Blessed, than that it has a very picturesque as well as a very volcanic appearance; and that its capital, Funchal, although neither so fine nor so large as I was led by descriptive accounts to believe it, had a gay, and, from the roadstead, a clean appearance.

On bidding adieu to Madeira, we again emerged into the open sea, and steamed our onward voyage across the broad Atlantic, on the course most probably pursued by the great Columbus and his gallant

companions in 1491, towards the island of Barbadoes—the first of the West India group at which these steamers touch—and the one at which (for the present) the mails are interchanged.

For at least two days before reaching Madeira, I had felt a sensible and gradual increase in the warmth of the atmosphere; and after leaving that “flower of the ocean,” the increase of the temperature was still more sensible. The lines of William Meyrick aptly describe the experience:—

“ See, at length th’ indulgent gales  
Gently fill our swelling sails.  
Swiftly, through the foamy sea,  
Shoots our vessel gallantly ;  
Still approaching, as she flies,  
Warmer suns and brighter skies.”

After the usual experiences of observing such signs of the approaching tropics as the gulf-weed, flying fish, sharks, and dolphins; and after entering the tropics, and gradually divesting ourselves of our European garments, and substituting dress of much more suitable texture and lightness, we reached Barbadoes on the eleventh day after sailing from Madeira.

Land had been announced ere I reached the deck, about seven o’clock in the morning, and the island was darkly visible when I first saw it. A short time, however, sufficed to define its outline; and in a few hours the ship came to anchor in Carlisle Bay, then filled with a number of vessels, including her Majesty’s line-of-battle ship the Wellesley, then carrying the flag of Admiral Lord Dundonald.



This being my introduction to tropical scenery, and the view of the town of Bridgetown from Carlisle Bay being a scene of much picturesque beauty, I was greatly and agreeably struck by the view which stretched itself before me on reaching the deck of the steamship. Carlisle Bay, Barbadoes, forms a curve of two miles or so, and the town of Bridgetown extends along it from point to point; the white houses of which the town is composed being freely intermingled with gigantic palm-trees, and other trees of tropical production; and the trees, flowers, and shrubs so totally different from, and at this distance so much more effective and beautiful than those of Europe, made, from mere novelty as well as beauty, a powerful impression on my mind. Nor was the feeling lessened on reaching the shore. The luxuriant vigour of the trees and shrubs, many of which I had never previously seen, save as the stunted or sickly exotics of an English conservatory, with the variety of the black and brown faces of the population, kept constantly impressed upon my mind the fact that I was now in a very different region from the realms of the north.

## BARBADOES,

The easternmost of the Windward Islands, and the scene of Addison's touching story of "Inkle and Yarico," lies between  $59^{\circ} 50'$ , and  $60^{\circ} 2'$ , of west longitude, and  $12^{\circ} 56'$  and  $13^{\circ} 16'$  of north latitude. The length of the island from north to south is twenty-five miles, and its breadth from east to west is about fifteen or

sixteen miles. Its superficial contents are estimated at somewhere about a hundred and seven thousand acres, and its present population at not less than a hundred and forty thousand—a population per acre larger, and more dense, than is to be found in any other portion of the known globe, not even excepting China. For reasons which will afterwards appear, this density of population has operated very favourably in, partially at least, protecting Barbadoes from the effects of the depreciating influences under which the rest of the British colonies in the West Indies have of late years been so severely suffering.

Although my stay in Barbadoes was short, I was enabled, through the kindness of a fellow-passenger—already referred to, himself a large proprietor in the island, and one generally known, particularly in connexion with his writings on the important subject of tropical agriculture—and of other friends, to see much of the island, and to much advantage. Of the many scenes I visited, that from Hacklestone Cliff is the one which most impressed me, and of which I feel it expedient to make prominent mention here. Although this cliff (which is nearly the highest elevation in the island) is not above eleven hundred feet in height, it commands one of the most beautiful panoramic views, both landward and seaward, which it is possible for the mind to conceive. Below the cliff, that part of the island denominated Scotland (from a supposed miniature resemblance to the land of mountain and flood) stretches before the

eye. On the right is a long line of sea-coast, and immediately in front lies a tropical valley of exceeding loveliness. It is possible that it was because my visit to Hacklestone Cliff, and the scene of enchantment that thence opened up to my view, formed my introduction, so to speak, to the more inland scenery of the tropics; and because I visited it in the society of four valued fellow-voyagers, and under the guidance of a kind friend, a resident proprietor of the island, that the loveliness of the view rises upon my mind many months afterwards—

“While the breeze of England now  
Flings rose-scents on my aching brow,”

with a freshness of pleasurable sensation which does not attend the recall of other scenes, of even greater magnificence and grandeur. Such, however, is the fact; and therefore it is that I recall and record the scene with a lingering pleasure, and that I recommend to every visitor to Little England, (as Barbadoes is oft-times called,) not to leave that beauteous island without paying a visit to Hacklestone Cliff. If the day be as fine as that I enjoyed, and he or she be as fortunate in fellow-voyagers and a cicerone as I was, the result will be a harvest of heartfelt pleasure and satisfaction.

There too it was, and in the hospitable mansion of the gentleman already referred to, that myself, and the English and Scotch friends who accompanied me, were for the first time introduced to the hospitalities of the West Indies, and to the abundant excellencies of a break-

fast and dinner, &c., in the mansion of an extensive West India planter. But as I have rather an abhorrence of the unauthorised introduction of private scenes into incidents of travel, and am compelled to acknowledge that the hospitalities of "Buttles" and of "Clayberry" were too good and too *recherché* to be taken as fair specimens of West Indian establishments,—I simply record the fact as above stated, and proceed to give a brief popular description of the processes of sugar-growing and sugar-making, as I witnessed them for the first time in this island, and on the estate of Drakeshall.

The origin of the name, and the history of the sugar cane, is generally given as follows: The name sugar is derived from its ancient name of *saccharum*, which, being corrupted into *sucra*, or as it is in Spanish *açucar*, gives our word sugar. Originally the plant was found in Asia, and it was introduced into the West Indies by Columbus and his followers. In appearance, it is a jointed reed of from six to twelve, or even fifteen feet high, and of various thicknesses, of which an average may be said to be two inches. From the expressed juice of this reed is the sugar derived, the canes being passed through rollers, placed sometimes perpendicularly, but more frequently horizontally, and driven either by steam, water, horse, or mule power, but much more frequently, in the West Indies, by a windmill. The expressed juice being run down into the boiling-house, it is there—after undergoing a certain process, to temper and cleanse it—subjected to

processes of skimming in coppers, or other pans, the heat being gradually increased, in the successive pans, until it reaches the boiling point in the last pan or boiler called in the English colonies, "The Teache." By these operations the juice is cleansed, and the water evaporated; and when the sugar begins to granulate, or rather when the granulation has proceeded a sufficient length, it is poured into coolers—whence it is removed into hogsheads, in which it is allowed to stand for at least fourteen days or three weeks, to allow the molasses to run out of it: after all which it is ready for shipment and sale.

Such is a very general view of the process of making Muscovado sugar, as it is usually practised in the West Indian Islands: To which I have only to add, that the canes are propagated, not from seed, but from the top of the old plant, which top is struck off before cutting down the cane to remove it to the mill; and that the whole process is a much simpler, as well as a much cleaner proceeding, than I had anticipated.

In Barbadoes, besides the general interest to be found in the really excellent society of the island, there are many objects worthy of a visit, and which will gratify the traveller who has reasonably good introductions, and time to spare. Among these may be mentioned Codrington College, situated on the confines or borders of the miniature Scotland—a stone building of no great pretensions to architectural beauty, but capable of accommodating nearly one hundred students, although now attended only by a much

smaller number ;—a burning spring, which emits sulphurated hydrogen gas, that ignites on being brought into contact with fire ;—and an extraordinary banyan tree. Of the two last, however, I can only speak from the report of others. But I saw enough of Little England, and of its hospitable inhabitants, during my too brief stay, to make me wish that stay had been longer, and to satisfy me that even a long residence would not exhaust the many sources of interest which the island displays.

## CHAPTER III.

“ Beautiful Islands ! brief the time  
I dwelt beneath your awful clime ;  
Yet oft I see, in noonday dream,  
Your glorious stars with lunar beam ;  
And oft before my sight arise  
Your sky-like seas—and sea-like skies.”

HENRY NELSON COLERIDGE.

LEAVE BARBADOES—ST LUCIA—MARTINIQUE—VOLCANIC PHENOMENA  
—A SHOAL OF PORPOISES—TROPICAL NIGHTS—ISLAND OF DOMI-  
NICA—GUADALOUPE—ANTIGUA—ENGLISH HARBOUR, ANTIGUA—  
ALONE IN A FOREIGN LAND—PECULIAR INTEREST ATTACHING TO  
ANTIGUA—CAPITAL OF ANTIGUA—ISLAND OF MONTSERRAT—  
ISLANDS OF WEST INDIAN ARCHIPELAGO AS PLACES OF SANITARY  
RESORT—COMPARATIVE VIEW OF WEST INDIAN ANNOYANCES—  
FIG-TREE HILL, ANTIGUA—SUNSET AT ST JOHN’S—ORANGE VALLEY  
—HEIGHT OF HILLS, AND CLEARNESS OF ATMOSPHERE—CHURCH  
IN ANTIGUA—SOUP HOUSE IN ST JOHN’S—EARTHQUAKE OF 1843  
—HURRICANE OF 1848—NEGROES, AND THEIR SAYINGS.

It was with much regret, and many farewells, that I parted with my friends at Barbadoes, and also with certain of my fellow-voyagers who had journeyed with me so far, and joined the steamship to proceed onward through the Windward and Leeward islands. But sad would have been the heart, and desponding the disposition, that would not have revelled in the beauty

of the scene, or felt many a thrill of ecstasy, on sailing through the summer sea.

After leaving Barbadoes, a sail of some ten or eleven hours brings the steamer to the island of

#### ST LUCIA,

Situated in north latitude  $30^{\circ}.14$ , and west longitude  $29^{\circ}$ , about twenty-three miles long by eleven broad, and containing a population of about 20,000 inhabitants.

The island of St Lucia is volcanic and mountainous, and, as seen from the sea, the aspect of its craggy summits is exceedingly picturesque. Particularly is it so when viewed under the influences of a tropical moonlight. Would that I were able, without exciting extravagant and ill-defined expectations, to give the reader a sufficiently graphic idea of the soft radiance and splendour of a fine night in the tropics. A bright moonlight night is everywhere delightful. Many have been the moon and starlight nights I have witnessed and enjoyed on the hills, amidst the glens, and, more than all, among or on the lakes of our own unrivalled northern land. But a moonlight night within the tropics exceeds, in brilliancy and in beauty, a moonlight night anywhere else. There is a softness as well as a splendour about it, which is peculiar to itself; a mellow brilliancy, which almost transcends description. Indeed, as it was in this part of my journeyings that my attention began to be attracted by the loveliness of the tropical nights, this seems the



proper place for recording my impressions regarding them. Whether on land or at sea, the scenery of the tropics on a moonlight night is singularly beautiful; to my taste, infinitely more so than it is by day. On land, the brilliancy of the moon and stars is such that every leaf, and tree, and flower, seems bathed in floods of liquid light; a light so clear, and at the same time so mellow, and so soft, that the outline of the hills and other objects appear to be defined, almost with greater distinctness than when they are viewed by day. At sea, particularly with such hill-crowned islands as St Lucia, Martinique, Dominica, Montserrat, or St Kitt's, &c., in near view, the scene is one still more lovely. The vast unfathomable sea, fit symbol of eternity, lying around you, either sunk in deep repose, or upheaving its vexed waves—in the one case a mirror for a thousand starry worlds, in the other a sparkling ocean of fire—the summits of the land illuminated and surrounded by a kind of halo: the scene has with it all the beauty of a northern moonlight night, and many beauties besides, peculiar to itself. A single fact will best illustrate the clearness of the atmosphere, and the greater prominence and brilliancy of the stars consequent thereupon. Oft when in Antigua, and also in the other islands of the West Indian seas, have I observed and called attention to the fact, that, in certain positions of the planet Venus, she was seen under a crescent form like a small moon, and emitting or transmitting, in the absence of the moon herself, a quantity of light which made her by no means an

insufficient substitute. Leaving St Lucia, after landing and taking on board the mails, the steamer proceeds to the romantic island of

#### MARTINIQUE,

Now, since she has lost Hispaniola, the chief possession of France in the West Indies, and certainly one of the most beautiful and romantic islands of the West India group. Martinique is situated in about west longitude  $61^{\circ}$ , and north latitude  $14^{\circ} 20'$ , and contains a population exceeding one hundred thousand inhabitants. The extreme length of the island is about forty miles, and its average breadth about ten, embracing a superficies of two hundred and ninety-one square miles. The approach to the island from the south is exceedingly striking. Among the first objects seen is the remarkable Diamond Rock, which stands detached from the rest of the land, and is about five hundred and eighty feet high, and of which a very gallant story is told as to the exploit of a Captain Morris, of the English navy, during the last war between England and France, in hoisting to, and mounting on, the summit of this natural fortress, a thirty-two pounder, and therewith doing sad damage to the works of the enemy.

The general aspect of Martinique is singularly rugged. The mountains, though not so high as those of Dominica, are higher than those of St Lucia, and they present a remarkably splintered and volcanic appearance. In looking at them, I was not unfrequently

reminded of a story I had heard of a member of the British House of Commons, who, wishing to give a graphic idea of the appearance of Martinique, squeezed a sheet of paper strongly up in his hand, and having thus made it all heights and hollows, laid it down on the table, as showing generally to his hearers the thunder-splintered pinnacles and deep glens of this beautiful isle.

The town of St Pierre, the capital of the island, and the place at which the British steamers land their mails, is a pretty, clean-looking place, of which the natives of the island are not a little vain. As contrasted with some other towns in the West India islands, such as Bridgetown in Barbadoes, St John's in Antigua, or Basseterre in St Kitt's, St Pierre in Martinique has certainly a superior appearance of permanency, residence, and comfort. It boasts too of a theatre, and also of sundry restaurants of small dimensions; and it rejoices for the present in a very beautiful row of tamarind trees, which grace the beach; and in a streamlet of water running down the centre of the principal street, and imparting at least the semblance of coolness. On the whole, the visitor will be much pleased with St Pierre, and its peculiarly French aspect, particularly as he cannot fail, in the course of his visit, to remark the truth of an observation I have somewhere met with, viz.—that the coloured females of this island excel in grace and beauty the ladies of the same complexion to be found in most of the other islands, and particularly those in the possession of

England. A similar remark is found to apply to the women of colour in the Spanish and Danish islands; so that it would really seem, as observed by Coleridge, that "the French and Spanish," and I would add the Danish "blood, seems to unite more kindly and perfectly with the negro than does our British stuff."

The favourite objects of purchase by tourists at Martinique, are the eau-de-cologne, manufactured in the island, and which is really excellent; and also sundry liqueurs of varied excellence and varied taste, compounded from native fruits and flowers, and meant to imitate the *noyau*, *curaçoa*, &c., of European fame.

At the time of the writer's visit in 1849, Martinique was in a very depressed condition. The prospects of the sugar crop were unfavourable, and universal were the complaints of the impossibility of getting the negroes, now free, to work at any reasonable amount or rate of wages. Indeed, great and reasonable fears were entertained that half of the present year's crop might be lost, through the difficulty of getting it off the ground and forwarded to the mill-house. Nor were the feelings of the planters at that time alleviated by much hope of compensation from the home government, on account of the heavy losses they had sustained by the emancipation of their slaves, or to aid them in adventuring on the new course of culture which that philanthropic measure had rendered necessary. So far as I could judge, the general opinion seemed to be, that, if compensation were awarded at

all, it would only be of a nominal kind—a sound of compensation without the substance of it; and in the pittance which has since been awarded by France to her colonists, in consideration of their loss by the liberation of their slaves, this opinion has been signally and sufficiently vindicated.

After leaving Martinique and its cloud-capt summits, the steamer proceeds to the British island of

## DOMINICA.

Situated about north latitude  $15^{\circ} 25'$ , and west longitude  $61^{\circ} 15'$ . This island is twenty-eight miles long by about sixteen broad, and contains a superficial area of 186,436 acres. The general character of the scenery is extremely mountainous, rugged and broken, and at its highest point it reaches the elevation of no less than five thousand three hundred feet. The approach to Dominica from the south is, like the approach to Martinique, exceedingly interesting and inspiring. On the occasion of which this is a narrative—on leaving St Pierre and while coasting along the shores of Martinique—the day was warm and beautiful, the sea a summer one, and the air tropically clear. The ship was for a time attended by a shoal of porpoises, which, tumbling and rolling along with their pig-like motions, called to the remembrance Horace's description of the sea-god,—

“Omne quum Proteus pecus egit altos  
Visere montes.”

Ere you lose sight of Martinique, Dominica be-

comes clearly visible ; and, on nearer approach, the sides of the mountains which crest and adorn it are seen to be clothed to their very summits with shrubs and trees ; while glens open up to view, (also clothed with shrubs and trees of various hues,) of such depth that the eye is unable to penetrate to the bottom of their recesses. At first it is impossible to distinguish the different kinds of trees and shrubs, that so numerous and so luxuriantly clothe both the heights and the hollows. But a few more revolutions of the rapidly moving paddles, and a few more heavings of the noble ship as she cleaves the calm but swelling sea in her onward course, and the deep green of the cedar or the mangrove, the feathery leaves of the tamarind and the ilex ; the light velvety green of the sugar-cane, and the brilliant hues of the “ Barbadoes pride,” become easily distinguishable, and create an impression on the mind that you are now at last approaching the “ garden of the tropics.” The town of Roseau, at which the steamer lands her mails, is a tolerably well-built town for a West India one ; but, like most of the towns in the English or French possessions in the West Indies, it bears too many marks of desertion and decay. It is, however, proper here to add, as regards Martinique, Dominica, Antigua, St Kitt’s, &c., that such appearances are greatly aided by, and oftentimes confounded with, the appearances produced by the earthquake of 1843, or by the hurricane of 1848, which devastated these islands to a truly appalling extent.

In the centre of the mountains of Dominica, and about ten miles from Roseau, there is a fresh-water lake of some extent. The island also exhibits traces of volcanoes now extinct, or at least now silent ; and I was assured, by intelligent residents, that these and other objects would amply repay a visit. My time, however, did not admit of the indulgence. So, after trafficking, as well as some of the other passengers, in the monstrosities, such as gigantic frogs stuffed and varnished, mountain pigs stuffed, &c., which formed the staple of trade with the Dominica boatmen, I proceeded onward with the steamer to

#### GUADALOUPE,

A French possession, situated at about  $62^{\circ}$  west longitude, and  $16^{\circ} 20'$  north latitude—sixty miles long by twenty-four broad. Properly speaking, Guadeloupe consists of two islands close together, of which the chief is the eastern division, or “Grande Terre,” the town of which is called Port-a-Pitre, or St Louis ; the town in the western division being called Basseterre ;—while, in the immediate vicinity of Guadeloupe, there are three very small islands called the Saintes, (after the town of Saintes in France,) all of which are inhabited and cultivated, and regarded as included within the limits of the French colony of Guadeloupe.

The chief object of interest in Guadeloupe is its singular volcanic hill, called La Souffrière, or Sulphur Hill, whose summit reaches a height of five thou-

sand five hundred feet. But, indeed, almost every one of the Caribbee Islands may boast of its sulphur hill. Although none of them at present have (and God forbid that any of them should ever have) volcanoes in active operation, there are few or none of them that do not bear some traces either of volcanic origin or of volcanic effects. These appearances are particularly observable in St Lucia, Martinique, and Guadaloupe. All these three islands are of a palpably different formation from Barbadoes. St Lucia bears marks of a volcanic nature in her boiling ponds, &c.;—the mountain soil of Martinique is largely composed of pumice, either in lumps or powder; and this pumice is oftentimes found intermixed with a ferruginous sand, such as is generally seen about volcanoes;—while, as above stated, Guadaloupe has its Souffrière, or sulphur hill, from whence large quantities of brimstone are daily brought by the negroes for the purpose of sale. Thus, almost all the islands of the Carib group betray evidences of volcanic character. In some, the volcano has become extinct, and is no longer to be traced. But in others, as in the Souffrière of Guadaloupe, there are decided and well-characterised craters, which are occasionally active, throwing out, on such far-between occasions, ashes, scorïæ, and lava, to a very great distance. Thus, there is an authentic account given of an eruption from the Souffrière of the Island of St Vincent, on the 1st of May 1812—on which occasion the mountain discharged ashes in quantities suffi-



cient to darken the air all around the island ; while some of these ashes were sent up so high, and blown so far, that they fell on the deck of a vessel three hundred miles to the westward of the island of Barbadoes.

If the reader of this book wishes farther to prosecute his inquiry as to these sulphur hills of the West India Archipelago, he will find a very interesting account of one of the most extraordinary among them—the one which exists in the romantic island of Montserrat—written by Dr Nugent, and published in the Transactions of the Geological Society.

From Guadaloupe to Antigua, the sail, in a steam vessel, is accomplished in a few hours. On the occasion of my visit, this portion of the voyage was the only stormy part of it—a fact which is impressed upon my mind by a somewhat amusing incident. During the voyage from England, one of my fellow-passengers had been a clergyman of the Church of England, who, with his wife and family, was proceeding to enter on his duties as chaplain to one of the embassies. Although the weather had been exceedingly fine, and the sea by no means rough, this excellent and reverend gentleman had suffered most severely from the demon of sea-sickness, from which he was then only beginning to recover. At Dominica we had taken in another gentleman of the cloth—a dignitary of the Church, in the person of the Right Reverend Bishop of Antigua, (the able and excellent Dr Davis;) and when about to leave the vessel at English Harbour,

Antigua, I was—in the midst of my regrets at parting with the many kind friends on board—amused by accidentally overhearing a conversation between two sailors, one of whom ascribed the then boisterous state of the weather to this increase in our complement of parsons; and, when reminded that it was against his theory of Neptune's hostility to the Church, that, notwithstanding our having had a parson on board all the way from England, the weather had been peculiarly fine, and the sea quiescent; the immediate answer was to the effect, that the sea-god had revenged himself by personally visiting the Rev. Mr P—with an unusual amount of sea-sickness. A small matter will often change the current of thought, and I was not sorry to take advantage even of this to divert my mind from the gloomy reflections that were crowding upon it, as, on a somewhat dark and cloudy midnight hour, I made my solitary first landing on the island of Antigua. I tried, therefore, to speculate upon the origin of so absurd a superstition; and I also reflected upon the somewhat singular combination of circumstances which in the present instance seemed to give somewhat of countenance to it: and, after shaking hands with the friends who had risen to see me disembark, I landed, in the earliest grey dawn of a stormy tropical morning, at English Harbour in the island of

## ANTIGUA,

Situated in north latitude  $17^{\circ} 3'$ , and west longitude

62° 7'. This island is divided into six parishes, is about eighteen miles long by fifteen broad, and contains a population of about forty thousand inhabitants, of whom upwards of thirty thousand are negroes, and above five thousand coloured persons, the rest of the population being white. Antigua enjoys the distinction of being the seat of government of the Leeward Islands. The capital of the island is the town of St John's, but the royal mail steam-packets do not land their mails or passengers there—chiefly, I believe, because there is not sufficient depth of water on or over the bar which lies at the entrance of the very beautiful, admirably protected, and capacious bay of St John's, to enable these steamships to get safely in. The passengers and mails are accordingly landed at English Harbour, on the east side of the island, which involves a drive of some twelve miles ere the traveller can reach any comfortable resting-place for the night. For, whatever the Guide Books say, it were only to mislead to induce the hope of obtaining, in the existing hostelry at English Harbour, such accommodation as an English traveller would consider comfortable. But it is impossible to remember with any feeling of regret a drive so beautiful.

Reader, have you ever felt the sensation of being alone in a foreign land, where all is new to you, all unknown, save through reading or report, and you yourself unknown to any of the many by whom you are surrounded? The feeling of isolation which for a moment came over me, when I found myself so situated, is one

I can scarcely ever forget; and if the reader can realise it, he or she will appreciate the prevailing sensation which, for a short time at least, oppressed me, as I stood alone in the dockyard at English Harbour, Antigua, in the dim light of earliest dawn, before starting on my solitary drive to the town of St John's.

But there were many things to interest, and to occupy the attention, in the scene which surrounded me. English Harbour forms one of the most compact, commodious, and secure harbours to be found, probably, in the whole world. The entrance is extremely narrow—so narrow that, as the steam-ship *Great Western* entered slowly in, it seemed as if her bulk filled the neck of the harbour. But within, the natural basin is deep and capacious; so deep that the largest line-of-battle ship of the British navy may be moored within it, and so capacious as to afford accommodation for a large squadron. While, being guarded by a chain across the narrow entrance, and commanded by a fort on the adjacent hill, merchant vessels lying in it are protected from the assaults of any enemy that Great Britain could have to fear. The ride from English Harbour to St John's, the capital of the island, is through a very interesting country. Seen as I saw it, under the beams of a tropical sun, in early morning, and with the dew upon the leaves, and the to me yet unfamiliar flowers, I thought it singularly beautiful. At some risings on the way, nearly the whole island is visible at once, and several

magnificent panoramic views are thus obtained ; while, for the greater part of the ride, the fortifications on the " Ridge," on which the Barracks for the white troops stand, form a frowning as well as a fine object in the view. The traveller is conveyed from the steamer at English Harbour by a phaeton or omnibus, one or other of which attends the arrival and departure of the steamers to convey the mails and passengers to and from the town of St John's. The mode of conveyance is comfortable, and the fare of two dollars is not unreasonably high, as are but too many of the charges for the means of progression or locomotion in the West India colonies.

It must, I presume, always be with feelings of considerable depression that the traveller, especially when labouring under a weakened frame, finds himself entirely alone, without a known face within his reach, and in a foreign country. I confess that, despite of all efforts to arouse myself, my feelings were of that sort, as, after bidding farewell to my kind friends and fellow-passengers on board the steamship, and expressing a hope, more than an expectation, that we might meet again, and watching the vessel as she renewed her voyage, and, steaming out of the harbour, again careered over the waste of waters, I took my solitary seat in the calèche which was to convey me to the town of St John's, Antigua. The advancing daylight, and the real beauty of the drive, soon, however, dissipated such feelings ; and I had nearly regained my wonted elasticity of spirits, when I

arrived at the inn or lodging-house (the latter term most fully describes all the "hotels"—so called—in the West Indies) which I, at the time, thought was to be my temporary abode for a period of a month or two. But I also confess that it required all my fortitude to withstand the reaction caused by my reception, and the place itself. For duty compels me to record the fact, for the benefit of subsequent tourists, particularly of invalid ones, that the ideas of what is included in the English term "comfort" must be limited indeed, if they be gratified by the comforts found in the hotel of St John's; and it is with some regret that I record this fact, seeing that, during my stay, the desire to contribute to my convenience was manifested in many ways, and only failed in being successful through the inherent deficiencies of the establishment, for which there is not that encouragement which can alone create or sustain the means of comfort. Fortunately, however, my stay in the hotel of St John's was of brief duration. Through the unexpected kindness of the Governor-general of the Leeward Islands, whose seat of government is in Antigua, and to whom I had been fortunate enough to bring letters from near and dear friends, I was, after a stay of a week in the hotel, enabled to take up my quarters in Government House; and it was during a sojourn of seven weeks there, and in the country-houses of Antiguan friends, whose kindness will never be forgotten while memory lasts, (and whose names I only refrain from recording for the

reason already mentioned when writing of my fellow-voyagers,) that I saw the scenes, and acquired the information, in reference to matters connected with this island of Antigua, which I now purpose to record in the immediately succeeding pages.

But, before leaving the subject of lodging-houses or hotels in the West Indies—and as this work is in some measure designed as a hand-book and guide for European invalids, visiting these islands in search of health—it is material to observe that, by a little pre-arrangement, which can easily be effected through the instrumentality of a friend in the island, all chance of serious discomfort may be avoided. By a little preparation on the part of the hotel-keeper, and a few additions on the part of the visitor, the hotel may be made a comfortable abode enough, not merely for a casual visitor, but for one who meditates a stay of a long duration. Besides, comfortable furnished lodgings can generally be secured by writing to a friend, before you arrive, to secure them, and have them in readiness for you; and *this* course I would strongly advise the invalid to adopt, in all cases in which it is practicable for him or her to do so.

For many reasons Antigua is, to the philanthropist, one of the most interesting of the numerous islands forming the West India group. It was there that slavery may be said to have been first abolished in the British West Indian possessions, inasmuch as the Colonial Legislature of Antigua at once rejected the apprenticeship system, and at once adopted entire

emancipation. This was in 1834. When the clock began to strike the hour of twelve o'clock on the last night in the month of July 1834, the thirty thousand negroes of Antigua were all slaves—slaves in every sense of the word—the property of others. When it had ceased to sound, they were all freemen—freemen under every meaning of that term—unfettered even by the apprenticeship, and at liberty to do what they chose with themselves and their powers of labour. Surely this was a stupendous, and therefore an interesting change. During my stay in Antigua I had many conversations on the subject, and heard many highly interesting details regarding it, from men of all shades of opinion as well as of colour. In particular, I enjoyed the privilege of hearing, from his own mouth, the views and opinions of the able and influential gentleman who moved the bill for rejecting the apprenticeship system, and adopting immediate emancipation: and all, and no one more emphatically than the talented Dr —— himself, concurred in describing the scene as calculated to excite feelings of the deepest interest. That the adoption of immediate emancipation, instead of taking advantage of the intermediate measure, called or miscalled the apprenticeship system, was a matter purely of policy and expediency, unconnected with feelings of morality or of religion, will not, it is presumed, be denied by any one. But the manner in which the boon was received by the negro population unquestionably reflects great credit on them, or on their advisers and leaders. The 31st of



July 1834 was a Thursday, and the evening of that day saw nearly the whole grown up negro population of the island of Antigua in the houses of prayer, engaged in religious exercises, chiefly of praise and thanksgiving. In the Wesleyan meeting-house, in the town of St John's, when the bell of the cathedral began to toll the hour of midnight—the hour that was to set them free—the whole audience sank on their knees, and continued thus to receive the blessed boon of freedom, until the last note had been tolled; when they rose to express their gratitude to God, and their rejoicings to each other. Few, whatever may be their views on the general question of emancipation, will deny either the interest or the impressiveness of such a scene. The coming day, Friday, was also devoted to religious exercises throughout the greater part of the island; as also was Saturday; and, as a matter of course, Sunday;—so that Monday the 4th of August 1834 was the first day on which the negro population of any part of the British colonial possessions in the West Indies worked as freemen—entirely and finally emancipated. It argues well for the negroes and their religious instructors, that it is generally conceded by the planters in the island of Antigua, that on no previous occasion had the workers on their different estates turned out better than they did, when thus, for the first time, called upon to labour at their occupation without the dread of the lash, in the event of their now refusing so to do.

In the numerous discussions in the British legisla-

ture and elsewhere, Antigua is generally represented as better supplied with the means of labour than the rest of our West India colonies—Barbadoes alone excepted: and that circumstance is usually referred to in explanation of the fact that this island has suffered less under, or rather struggled more successfully against, the depressing influences against which the West India planters have of late years had to contend. This is, however, only in part correct. That Antigua has not suffered quite so much as some of the other English colonies have done, from the operation of the Sugar Duties' Act of 1846, has been as much owing to the fact that the estates in that island are owned by a body of enlightened proprietors and agriculturists, many of whom are resident in the colony, as to any other cause; and that, even still, there is a deficiency of labour, is shown by many circumstances, of which the late introduction of a large body of Portuguese labourers is only one. In point of fact, with the single exception of Barbadoes, none of the British colonies in the West Indies are sufficiently supplied with labourers; and this is a truth which is constantly lost sight of by those who, despite the evidence of actual experience, still meet the claims of the West India proprietors with the plea that "free labour is as cheap as slave labour." The effect of emancipation obviously and necessarily, though perhaps not quite immediately, was greatly to lessen the number of *field* labourers. It lessened their number by withdrawing from agriculture and from sugar-making a number

of persons who, resorting to the towns and villages, formed there a kind of intermediate class of small shopkeepers and artisans or tradesmen. And it also lessened the amount of labourers on the crops, by removing from field labour numbers of the young of both sexes, whose aid had been previously available at times of planting, hoeing, or crop time, and generally for all departments of light work. That such changes were, in certain points of view, desirable, is not disputed. But the effect they had on the operations of the British planter, in the rearing of sugar canes, and in the manufacture of sugar and of rum, must, it is obvious, have been very injurious; and, without here entering at large into a question which I will have an opportunity of discussing at greater length in the concluding chapter of this volume, I would here draw the reader's attention to the consideration, that it would only have been fair to the British West India planters, that care had been taken to supply them with some substitute for the "power" withdrawn from them under the operation of the Act of Emancipation, *before* exposing them to the effects that have arisen from acting upon a belief in the truth of the very questionable dictum that—in so far at least as tropical cultivation and manufactures are concerned—the labour of freemen is as cheap and as effective as is the labour of slaves.

To return, however, to the metropolitan island of the Leeward group.

Antigua, though certainly not one of the most

romantic of the West India islands, possesses many scenes of exceeding loveliness, and the two months I passed within its limits are classed among the most pleasing of my treasures of memory. Subject, as I knew the island to be, to long-continued droughts, and reading, as I had done in the works of Coleridge and others, of its being very scantily supplied with springs, I had prepared myself for a much more arid spot than I found it to be. "Healthful withal, but dry and adust," was the verdict of anticipation that I had passed on this the largest of the British Leeward Islands; and, from conversations with others, I know that this is a very general impression regarding Antigua. I have, however, the pleasing office of contradicting it. Although none of the hills of Antigua are high enough to be entitled to the name of mountains, they rise so abruptly from the sea and from the plains, as to give them an appearance of altitude which produces the same effect as if they were of greater height; and among the hills on the sea-coast, on the south-west of the island, there are to be found many scenes of great beauty, if not of exceeding grandeur.

The town of St John's—the capital of Antigua—is situated on the west or south-west side of the island, and contains, I was several times assured, about ten thousand inhabitants, although it has not the appearance of so large a population. The streets are broad, and at right-angles with each other; and when the mind of a European gets familiarised with the cara-

van-like style of the mansions, there is a good deal of regularity, and something to admire in the appearance of the houses. On all hands I was informed that, previous to the terrific earthquake which visited Antigua and her Leeward sisters in 1843, the town of St John's was much more handsome and regular than it is now; and evidence of the truth of the remark is to be seen in the numerous negro huts, crowded into spaces between more opulent-looking mansions; spaces which had been formerly occupied by houses of greater pretensions and magnitude, but which, in the present condition of matters even in Antigua, their owners had not found it convenient to rebuild, after they were shaken down by the earthquake itself, or blown down by the tempest by which it was accompanied. But the situation in which St John's stands is its chief beauty—on the shore of one of the loveliest bays that the eye can repose upon—a bay shut in by hills on almost every side. From the shore of this bay, the ground on which the town stands rises up in a gradual slope towards the cathedral, which is as it were the Acropolis, and forms a most imposing object in the landscape. There is therefore much to admire in the position of the capital of Antigua, and still more in the natural objects by which it is surrounded.

One of the most conspicuous objects in or about St John's is the cathedral, mentioned above as standing on the brow of the acclivity on which the town is built—and which, although not strictly of any particu-

lar kind or school of architecture, or distinguished by architectural beauty of any description, is an imposing structure. It occupies the site of a former cathedral which was destroyed by the earthquake of 1843, and of which the inhabitants of the island seem to have a fond and favourable recollection. The present building is large, being capable of containing above two thousand people. The cost of its erection was little short of £40,000 sterling. It is built of a kind of marl-stone found in the island, and its interior is lined throughout, roof and all, with the same timber of which the seats or pews are fashioned; and, this wood being as yet unpainted, the whole has a novel effect to the eye of one direct from England. Although there is no regulation, or even understanding on the subject, all parts of the church being open to all classes, without distinction of colour, yet in practice the body of the building is usually occupied by the white population—the people of colour and the negroes occupying the side aisles and galleries—there being, as it appeared to me, an obvious separation even between the two latter in regard to the portions of the church which they severally tenanted. All this, however, is simply the result of those feelings of caste which, to a certain extent at least, as yet prevail in the West Indies; and of which, notwithstanding the assertions of several writers to the contrary, the European traveller among the islands of the West Indian Archipelago will, if he attentively observes, find many evidences or perchance remains. Various

attempts have from time to time been made, by liberal-minded governors and others, to break down the feeling which isolates the classes, and particularly the coloured people from the whites, but only with very minor effect; and whatever may be the case in matters of business, assuredly it is but the simple truth to say, that there is little homogeneousness of feeling or of sympathy, in regard to matters of social intercourse. Attempts at mixed dinner parties or mixed balls have been attempted in few places, save occasionally at Government Houses; and even there their success has not been such as to lead to their frequent repetition. My present object is merely to record facts as they impressed myself, not to speculate upon them. Were it otherwise, I might be disposed to express at greater length my sympathies with the coloured population of many of the West India colonies, and the reason why I think it were most desirable that, as a body containing many persons of much talent, energy, and general acceptability, they should be somewhat better amalgamated with their white fellow-countrymen, by a more entire breaking down of that "middle wall of partition" which as yet separates the two classes in many important respects.

The incumbents officiating in the pastoral office in the Cathedral of St John's, Antigua, in 1849, were the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, (Dr Davis,) the venerable Archdeacon Holberton, the Rev. Mr Warner, and a fourth reverend gentleman, recently appointed.

Allusion has been made to the earthquake of 1843, which levelled nearly with the ground the former cathedral of Antigua. Of this earthquake, the disastrous effects are yet to be seen in every part of the island. Shortly after it occurred, and at a time when I had but little idea of visiting Antigua, I received from a young relative, then in the island with his regiment, an account of it, contained in a letter dated 12th February 1843, in which it is mentioned that "there was not a single stone or brick building which had not been levelled with the ground; and that on board a ship at sea, at the distance of one hundred and sixty miles from any of the islands, the shock was so severely felt that the shipmaster imagined the vessel had struck on a rock." From information received from the gentleman who fills the position of coroner for the island, and who, as a proprietor himself and also as attorney for others, has a deep interest in all matters relating to Antigua, I learned that the number of deaths caused by the convulsion through the fall of the buildings, and otherwise, throughout the island, little exceeded twenty—a number small when the extent of the disaster in other respects is taken into consideration, and only to be accounted for by the fact that the negro houses are built of such light materials that their fall or overturn does not involve the destruction of human life.

The prison of St John's, Antigua, deserves mention, were it only to note the vast improvement that must have taken place in its construction and arrangements



since the year 1825, when Mr Coleridge visited and described it as being "like most others in the West Indies, that is to say, as bad in every way as possible." However applicable this description may have been to the former place of duranee in Antigua, it is only justice to record the fact, that it has no application whatever to the present airy and cleanly erection. It was visited by me in the society of Dr Nicolson, junior, whose firm exercise the medical and surgical superintendence over it; and for ventilation, cleanliness, and facilities for labour and solitary confinement, (when these last are inflicted by judicial appointment,) I question if it is surpassed by any prison of equal extent, in any part of the world. The number of prisoners in custody at the time was about eighty, being within fifty of the entire number the prison is calculated to contain. The daily cost of maintaining each prisoner was about sixpence per day, being a reduction of twopence per day from the former cost—a reduction effected under certain economical arrangements, suggested and prescribed by the present Governor-general (Higginson), who takes a personal interest in this matter, as he does in everything else that affects the wellbeing of the islands over which he has the honour to preside as the representative of the Crown. That the daily cost or allowance of each prisoner is amply sufficient for his or her comfortable maintenance, may be gathered from the fact, that instances are by no means uncommon in which prisoners in the jail of Antigua have disputed the order for their liberation,

on the ground that the period of confinement prescribed by their sentence had not fully expired—preferring the comforts of the prison to those of their own huts. It is to be feared, however, that such cases have only occurred where the confinement was “without labour,” and that they have merely proceeded from the indolence of the negro character—an indolence so nearly universal as to lead almost to the conviction that it is constitutional.

At the date of my visit to the jail of Antigua, there was only one prisoner in the debtors' ward. This fact, however, did not prove anything either for or against the proportion of the population exposed to such execution against the person. It rather arose from the circumstance that, in Antigua, as in all civilised places, it has been discovered to be but a coarse and irrational way of stimulating a man to industry, to place him where his exertions can be of little or no use either to others or to himself: aided also, no doubt, by the influences of a law which I found in the pages of the statute-book of the local legislature of the island—and which is interesting to a Scotsman as showing a resemblance to the law which has long been in existence in his native land on this subject—which law compels the incarcerating creditor to provide for the wants of his indigent debtor while in jail, by paying for him one shilling a-day, in the way of aliment, on the debtor making oath that he has not the wherewithal to support himself.

Of the general aspect of the island of Antigua, as

regards the position and appearance of the estates and the general state of cultivation, I could write at some length, having enjoyed the advantage of visiting the chief works and plantations in the society of their respective owners and managers. But to do so would not give a fair exposition of the condition of the British West India colonies in these respects. For although, even in this metropolitan and favourably situated island, the appearances of decadence are but too painfully evident, it is well known that, owing to the large proportion of proprietors resident in Antigua, there is in it an accumulation of talent, intelligence, and refinement, and consequent enterprise, greater probably than is to be found in any other West India colony, except perhaps Jamaica. If, therefore, any one goes to Antigua prepared to see anything of that inattention to proper and economical cultivation and management, of which one occasionally hears so much in the high places of Parliament and elsewhere, he will find himself mistaken and agreeably surprised. The steam-engines, patent sugar-pans, and other improved apparatus on the island, are numerous, and every effort has been made to lessen the cost of manufacturing sugar, molasses, and rum; while, as regards agricultural matters, the most improved modes of husbandry have been introduced on almost every estate. And it is a fact told me by the well-known proprietor of one of the finest estates in the island, (the estate of Cedarhill,) that in times of prosperity, when sugar cultivation was remunerative, many Scotch

ploughmen and Scotch ploughs were introduced at great expense into the island, to improve the culture of the soil. Indeed, it was from seeing Scotch ploughs, of Wilkie's patent, in operation at a ploughing match in Antigua, that the proprietor of an estate, in the county of Chester in England, formed the resolution to introduce their use on his own estates at home. Facts like these are surely better than a thousand theories or unsubstantiated statements. Although the destruction of their hopes, under the influences of later legislation, have, in a great measure, destroyed the spirit and lessened the means of the Antiguan planters and proprietors to make improvements in farming and distillation, or sugar-making, it is beyond dispute that they have, in less depressing times, proven both their desire, and their ability, to adopt every means of improving the whole three.

Suffice it therefore here to say, on the subject of the general appearance of the country portion of Antigua, that the whole island is well cultivated—studded over with the buildings of the different estates, thrown together in groups, and consisting of the proprietors' and managers' mansions and outhouses, with the negro huts, and the sugar-works, distilleries, and windmill. In general, the mansion-houses are favourably situated—oftimes with much attention to picturesque effect. The cane-fields come up to the roadside, and are without fences of any kind—probably because timber is scarce, and because hedgerows would have a tendency to exhaust the lands of their moisture.

The greatest difficulty the cultivator of the soil has to contend with seems to be, the extirpation of what is somewhat appropriately named "Devil's Grass,"—a sort of running weed which spreads with great rapidity, and is of very difficult eradication.

Besides the works of the proprietors, and their concomitant negro villages, there are sundry "independant villages," inhabited chiefly by negroes, in various parts of the island, which have sprung up since emancipation, and which interfere somewhat with the cultivation of the estates, from the fact that the negroes who dwell in them are oftentimes drawn off to the cultivation of the plots which surround their houses, at times when the want of their labour on the cane-fields and at the sugar-works is severely felt. This evil is experienced by the planters in many other of the colonies, and especially in the island of Jamaica.

In the vicinity of Antigua stands the small island of

#### MONTSERRAT.

Situated in west longitude  $62^{\circ} 17'$ , and north longitude  $16^{\circ} 48'$ .

To this island the English steamer proceeds after leaving Antigua, and thus it may be reached in a few hours. Indeed, at any time, with the advantage of the trade-wind, Montserrat may be reached from Antigua during a forenoon; although the return to Antigua may, in a sailing vessel, be the work of a couple of days, as the trade-wind is of course adverse to a speedy return voyage.

The island of Montserrat, as the reader may desire to know, was so named by Columbus from a real or supposed resemblance to the famous mountain of Montserrat in Catalonia in Spain; which in its turn derived its name from the Latin word *serra*, a saw, because the rugged appearance of its summit gave it some resemblance to that useful instrument.

Montserrat, though small—being only about nine miles long by eight or nine broad, and containing not more than from forty thousand to fifty thousand acres—is an exceedingly pretty and also a salubrious island, and will well repay a visit. Like some of the islands in its vicinity, it boasts a Souffrière, of which a very good description is given by Coleridge, in his usual lively, enthusiastic strain; and on the ride to the scene, as well as in other parts of the island, there are many scenes of great beauty and interest.

The negro population of the island speak with an Irish accent, probably from a large part of its early trade having at one time been with Ireland, and there being at one time Irish managers and proprietors in the island. In 1770 the value of its exports to Ireland was above £80,000, while to England the inhabitants of the island only exported to the value of £7,400. Mr Coleridge says of this accent, that it forms the most diverting jargon he ever heard in his life; but the following anecdote, well known to those who have visited the island, will best illustrate both its nature and its extent. Viewing, as the inhabitants of the Leeward Islands generally do, Antigua as the capital

and headquarters of their number, the negro who has "emigrated" from Antigua to Montserrat talks of the length of time he has been "out," just as the Canadian or Australian emigrant does of the length of time that may have elapsed since last he saw the bold mountains of his native Scotland. And it is said that many years ago, when an emigrant from the Emerald Isle was about to settle in Montserrat, he was surprised to find that the negro who was rowing him from the ship to the shore spoke with as pure a Milesian brogue as he did himself. Taking the negro for an Irishman, though a blackened one, and desirous of ascertaining the length of time that it took so thoroughly to tan the "human face divine," the Patlander addressed his supposed countryman with the question, "I say, Pat, how long time have you been out?" "Three months," was the astounding answer. "Three months!" ejaculated the astonished and alarmed son of Erin—"three months! and as black as my hat already. Row me back to the ship. I wouldn't have my face *that black* for all the rum and sugar in the West Indies."

But the reader may well ask whether the writer's experiences, as a stranger visiting the West Indies for the first time, were all of the pleasing character recorded in the preceding pages—whether there were not many things offensive—many things which may fairly be placed in the category of West Indian annoyances? Most certainly there were many such; and these sketches would be very incomplete did they not contain an attempt, at least, to prepare, and conse-

quently to fortify, the visitor—particularly the invalid visitor—for what he has to encounter in the way of inconvenience or unavoidable annoyance. A few pages shall therefore be now devoted to the recording of some of my own evil experiences, although many of the sources of discomfort to be noticed were not felt till I visited the Danish or Spanish islands, in an after part of the journeyings of which this book contains the narrative.

Of the general effects of the climate of the West Indies on a European, and particularly on one in delicate health, little need here be said. It is hot, but, at the season of my visit, between February and June, not so hot as I had been led to anticipate from the representations of others. With proper precautions, no one who visits the West Indies solely on account of health (and who is therefore not under the necessity of exposing himself or herself often to the noonday sun) need make the heat any ground of serious objection. There is generally, if not always, a breeze which tempers the intensity of the sun's rays; and the only remark the writer deems it necessary to make on this subject is, that, after visiting nearly the whole of the islands of the West Indian Archipelago north of Barbadoes, his experience is, that there is much more chance of injury from disregarding the changes of the climate, and the occasional blasts and chills of evening, than of much discomfort being felt from excessive heat. In Barbadoes, and the islands to the north of it, the thermometer varies very greatly—



ranging in the shade from a little above  $70^{\circ}$  to  $110^{\circ}$ , and even sometimes higher—the variation being of course dependent on the comparative elevation, and also on the degree of exposure to the breeze from the sea. In Barbadoes there is no ground which can be characterised as mountainous, the highest elevation in that island being little above eleven hundred feet. But there is a sea-breeze generally prevalent, which greatly tempers the heat. In Antigua there are many situations of some elevation, where a delightful climate may be had; and the same remark applies, even more strongly, to Montserrat, Nevis, and St Kitt's. The genial breezes and verdure of Santa Cruz have recommended it to the Americans and others as a place of sanitary resort; and in the noble mountains of Dominica, Martinique, and still more of Jamaica, (the island of springs,) may be found every degree of climate, from sultry to temperate, and even to cold. Everything, therefore, depends on the proper selection by the invalid of his place of retreat. In the course of my remarks, I shall have occasion to explain my reasons for affirming that, many as are the invalids, and particularly those labouring under pulmonary complaints, who now occasionally visit the West Indies, there is not only far too great ignorance prevalent as to the superior advantages of these islands as places of sanitary retreat, but there is often much ignorance displayed in the selection of the particular island to which the patient goes or is sent. Meantime, however, I shall simply content myself with

remarking that, while the subject is an important one, involving as it does the hopes of many a household, and the question of recovery or of non-recovery of many a fair face and lovely form, *there is provided by Providence in the great range of temperature to be found in the West Indian islands, climates suitable for almost every stage and variety of pulmonary complaint.*

But, even after having made a good selection, as regards the place of residence, the European, and especially the English visitor, should be somewhat prepared for meeting with various experiences which may offend his habits, or militate against his comfort. Some one has before remarked, that comfort is a word which has a peculiarly English meaning as well as sound; and during a temporary residence in the West Indies, the English visitor may be occasionally reminded of this fact. Not to speak of the comparatively open, desolate, and unfurnished appearance which some West India houses (and particularly most of the West India lodging-houses) have to an eye straight from the closely fashioned and richly carpeted rooms of England, there are other differences to be enumerated, which have a tendency to offend, at least the prejudices, of the European traveller. With regard to these, the views and opinions of different writers will of course vary, according either to their home habits and experiences, or according to the nature and extent of the opportunities afforded each for observation: those favoured with introductions to the better society of each of the

colonies, seeing little of them, and judging accordingly; and those going to the West Indies without such introductions, having their attention much attracted (query, distracted?) by the bare floors, unglazed windows, and uncushioned seats, occasionally to be encountered in most of the lodging-houses or hotels. But, apart from the question of houses, there are other more general sources of annoyances to be encountered in the dogs and cocks that disturb your sleep by night, and in the musquitoes, chigas, and other insects, that war against your equanimity both by night and day. In such things the visitor from the north of Europe should expect to find, for at least the first season of his visit, enough to annoy him not a little. Where all the dogs come from, sometimes puzzles one to know; but the interest of the inquiry in no way lessens the discomfort of having one's sleep broken up into fragments by the incessant yellings and yelpings which these curs generally keep up in the towns through the livelong night; and it were really worth the attention of the island legislatures of Barbadoes and Antigua, &c., to take, even from so humble a book as the present, the hint to put a tax upon dogs—if not for the sake of increasing much the colonial revenues, at least as an act of charity towards such invalids as the search after health may induce to visit their hospitable shores. But the cocks are not one whit behind the dogs in this crusade against sleep. For, whether it be that Creole poultry never sleep at all, or that they sleep through the day, and mistake

the bright beams of the chaste moon for the ardent gaze of Phœbus, and lift up their voices during the night—the crowing, barking, and yelping heard at night in the respective capitals of Barbadoes and Antigua, St Kitt's and Santa Cruz, are amply sufficient to render irate the temper even of a very patient man, and to justify the volley of stones occasionally discharged at the more intrusive disturbers of rest who venture within “fire.” To such and suchlike occasional annoyances, may be added the petty warfare of the insect tribes, which, engendered and fostered by the heat, and unaffected by the frosts to which in northern climes the inhabitants are indebted for their being exterminated or kept within bounds, multiply and swarm in myriads, which it takes some time, for a lady visitor especially, to get accustomed to. Of these insects the chiga, and better-known musquito, shall here only be mentioned.

The chiga, or “jigger,” as it is usually called, is a small black or dark-brown fly, which, getting under the nails or under the folds of the skin and other tender parts of the human body, is, if not very soon removed, sure to engender irritation and pain, and sometimes even worse consequences. After so inserting itself, the animal lays its eggs; and if these are allowed to remain, the part some days afterwards begins to swell and inflame, the extent to which this proceeds being only measured by the length of time the animal and its products are suffered to linger in the flesh. But as it always makes its presence

known by an itchy or tickling sensation—a sensation, by the way, which the writer has heard many describe as rather pleasurable than otherwise—there is no chance of any injury if the animal is then removed, as it may very easily be. But the negroes and other labourers, such as the Portuguese work-people lately brought into Antigua, and into some of the other West India Islands from Madeira, and especially the latter, are strangely indifferent to the attacks of the chiga and other insects. In the hospitals, and on the roads, persons are often met with, who, by want of attention to cleanliness and disregard of the attacks of the chiga, have been rendered helpless and diseased objects of charity. There is a pretty general belief prevalent amongst the negroes and coloured population, that there are two kinds of chigas—one poisonous, and the other not so. But there is no proper foundation for such belief, and it has probably arisen from the fact that while the working population, who neglect precautions and cleanliness, often suffer much, the higher classes, who act more prudently, seldom suffer in any way.

But the much abused and widely diffused musquito is, in my opinion, if not the most dangerous, at least the most annoying of all the insects which swarm in the beams of a tropical sun. Of these insects I have heard at least five kinds named in different parts of the West Indian Archipelago—the coraci, zuncudo, rodactor, jaguey, and lancetero. These are names peculiar to Cuba; but they describe species of the insect which

are to be found in most of the islands. My first acquaintance with the West Indian musquito was made during a week's residence in an indifferent lodging-house in St John's, Antigua, where, in consequence of my not being protected from their attacks by the almost indispensable musquito net, I was peculiarly exposed to their assaults; and, judging from my experience at that time, I would have supposed, not only that they were a legion in point of number, but that they were the worst of the many species into which the Cubans divide those to be found in their island. Indeed, it was not till an after period of my journeyings, when in the Spanish colonies, and also in the southern states of America, that I found any of the musquito tribe more annoying than those encountered in Antigua. First impressions are, however, always the most acute, if not always the most lasting; and it is therefore during the first weeks of his sojourn that the invalid will feel most annoyance from the cause referred to. Moreover, and the assertion will seem a strange one, almost as much discomfort is produced by the *buzz* or humming of the insect as by its bite. Like that class of grumblers referred to in a well-known Scottish adage, it may be said of the musquito that his buzz or "bark" is "waur than his bite." This is a remark which is almost universally made by visitors who have been a short time in any of these colonies. The humming sound, produced by the motion of the wings of the insect, and which impresses the mind with the conviction that it is only

selecting a soft and sensitive point of attack, often proves very annoying, particularly to one debilitated by illness. Indeed, the bite of the insect is scarcely felt at the time ; nor is it productive of much annoyance at any time, provided only the party operated upon can refrain from rubbing the part that may be affected.

Such are some of the sources of discomfort which the visitor may expect to encounter during the first few months of his residence in the West Indies. At the utmost they are but trifling ones, and such as ought not to be considered by any as a serious objection to undertaking the voyage, particularly when health is in view. Indeed, I would not have thought them worthy of mention at all, had it not been that my remarks are intended chiefly for the perusal and preparation of the invalid, and had it not been that my own personal experience leads me to think that a little anticipation of what may actually be felt, would have prevented much of the discomfort to which I have alluded.

To return, however, to Antigua and its scenery.

Although, as already mentioned, no part of the island is so high as to be entitled to the character of mountainous, the highest hill in it scarcely reaching the height of twelve hundred feet, yet the fact that the hills, particularly on the southern side of the island, spring directly from the sea on the one side, and from the plain on the other, gives to them an appearance of majesty which one would not anticipate from a knowledge of their actual height. This circumstance

often reminded me of a statement I had heard in a neighbouring and therefore a rival island, that "there was a metropolitan air about Antigua and its inhabitants, and that even the very hills lifted up their heads and tried to look like mountains."

Amongst these hills there are many scenes of rich and rare beauty. The summits called the Ridge and Monks-hill, on which the English Government have erected their garrison and fortifications, are very fine objects in the landscape, and will amply repay a visit. Indeed, the whole of the scenery in the southern parts of the island, and in the vicinity of English Harbour, is replete with beauty; although, perhaps, the only scene in it which can be fairly characterised as magnificent, is that known by the name of Fig-Tree Hill. The tortuous descent of this hill, clothed as the sides of it are with every description of tropical forest-trees, intermixed with shrubs of every variety of kind and colour, affords a scene of very unique grandeur, and fully justifies Mr Coleridge's observation regarding it, that it is "a landscape so exquisitely beautiful, that no poet or painter who had once seen it could ever forget the sight!" Indeed, and without professing any title to painting or to poetry, I shall ever regard the ride which opened up to me the remarkable beauties and tropical grandeur of Fig-Tree Hill, Antigua, as entitled to a place among what Dr Browning calls—

"Memory's gems of thought."

It is in the descent of this hill that the visitor is reminded, by his attention being directed to the way-



side spring as an object of interest or remark, that Antigua is dependent on the rains that fall for the supply of water. For, although it is not quite correct to say, as is often done, that there are no springs in this island, still there are very few, and those that are to be found are very inconsiderable. Indeed, this very clear one, to be found on the left-hand side of the road, before entering the dark descent of Fig-Tree Hill, is the only one which is not brackish, from the interference of water from the sea.

But it is only those who entertain northern notions of what is called "rain water," who would regard this fact as an objection to a residence in the island. Whether it be that the absence of smoke causes the rain to reach the earth in a state of greater purity, or that more attention is paid to its purification and safe keeping after it is gathered into tanks, I know not; but this I know, that I never felt the want of good pure water while I sojourned in Antigua, and that I would probably not have known whence the water I got to drink had been derived, had I not made inquiry upon the subject. The want of spring water in Antigua is, therefore, not felt to be a want even by those who do not belong to the class of the West Indian, who, when applied to to decide a dispute as to the salubrity of water in an island in which he had resided for seventeen years, answered—"Water, gentlemen!—water! I really don't recollect ever having tasted *the water*."

But among the very beautiful scenes which I had

the pleasure and privilege of witnessing in this, the metropolitan island of the Leeward group, there was none that struck me with more pleasurable feelings than the beautiful appearance of a tropical sunset, as witnessed from the acropolis of the town of St John's, or from any of the neighbouring hills. It is a scene which may be witnessed nearly every evening, and particularly if the return to St John's, from an afternoon excursion, is timed so as to command it. The mountains of Montserrat, Nevis, and St Kitt's, on the right and left of the picture, the broad ocean lying between, generally in a state of calm repose, with the golden sun occasionally seen on the verge of the horizon, as he appears to burst through or part asunder the dark clustering clouds that attend his setting—looking, as I have somewhere read, like faithful courtiers in waiting on the deathbed of their monarch at the close of a glorious reign; the richly coloured and fantastically grouped masses of the clouds themselves, with their broken splintered summits, “bathed in floods of liquid fire;” the beautiful bay of St John's, with Goat Island Hill and sundry other summits in the foreground, or rather a little to the right of the picture—such materials combined, as I have often seen them when returning from an afternoon's ride in Antigua—form a union of scenic beauties, and compose a view of rich and rare excellence, such as no lover of nature could ever forget.

There are many other scenes of much beauty to be found in the island of Antigua, to which the attention

of the visitor is generally directed ; but none appeared to me to possess such superior excellence as to lead me to suppose that a description of them would interest the general reader, however sufficient they proved themselves to attract, and even to engross agreeably, my own attention at the time. In the memory of such scenes, a visit to Orange Valley, and a return to Government House, St John's, with an equestrian party of agreeable friends, in the bright but mellow light of a tropical moon, by the shores of Five Island Bay, and through the appropriately named "Dark Valley," occupies a conspicuous place. It was in the course of this ride that I first favourably remarked both the appearance of great height given to the hills, from their rising almost immediately from the level of the sea, and the extraordinary clearness of the tropical atmosphere. As regards the first of these, a hill of eight hundred or one thousand feet high has almost the appearance of a mountain ; and after toiling up the acclivity, with a scorching sun nearly vertical, one is almost disappointed at being told the real altitude to which he has attained : while in reference to the second, the purity and clearness of the atmosphere is so great that, looking from the mansion-house of the estate, which is situated on the hill-side, across the intervening valley, objects of a comparatively small size are seen with a distinctness which renders all their movements, and even their "cut" and character, figure and dress, (such as they have,) discernible to the spectator, although he and the

object he looks at be separated by the distance of a mile and more.

In a work like the present, and keeping in view the avowed object of it, as explained in the outset, it were out of place to enter into any lengthened exposition of the condition of Antigua, as regards morals or religion. But I feel that I were wanting in common justice, were I to refrain from adding my testimony in favour of the fact, that the inhabitants of this island, white, coloured, and black, may and do contrast favourably with that of any city or place that I know of, both as regards morals, and attention to religious observances. Nowhere, although a native of a land which claims some distinction in this respect, did I ever see the sanctity of the Sabbath more worthily and more devoutly recognised than I did in the island of Antigua; and I know that I record the sentiments of the very highest authority in the island, (a gentleman who has proved the sincerity of his anxiety for the welfare of Antigua and her sister groups,) when I say that many thanks are due as well to the Moravian and Wesleyan ministers of the gospel, as to the zealous clergymen of the Established Church, in this portion of the colonial empire of Great Britain, for the educational and religious position which Antigua at present holds.

As regards the religious establishments at present in the island, they may be enumerated in the following order, and as consisting of about the following numbers; and although I could not learn that there were any means of ascertaining exactly the numbers

in each class, I have confidence in the opinion that the statement I obtained, from some of the heads of the different bodies themselves, will not prove in any particular materially inaccurate.

In connexion with the Established Church there are six parish churches, (including the cathedral at St John's,) and about as many chapels of ease; and in attendance on these churches and chapels are to be found a very large proportion of the white and coloured population, (who are generally estimated at five thousand and two thousand five hundred respectively,) and about five thousand of the negroes. Of the numbers of the Moravians I am enabled to write with entire accuracy, having in my possession a manuscript statement with which I was favoured by Mr Westerby, the excellent and highly esteemed superintendent of that body in the island. The Moravian brethren have in Antigua, at present, nine churches and chapels, under the charge of ten ministers; while of the eight thousand eight hundred and six members of the population in connexion with the body, six thousand two hundred and ninety-eight are adults, and, of the last-mentioned number, four thousand six hundred and eight are communicants. Nearly the whole of these persons are negroes, only a few of them being of the coloured population, and still fewer of them white. Following up the principles of their profession, the Moravian body in Antigua have already schools in connexion with the churches. They have at present nine Sunday schools, which are attended by two thousand one hundred and ninety-five scholars,

who, of course, are nearly all negroes, and whose education is presided over by no less than one hundred and six female, and one hundred and seven male teachers. But certainly none of the institutions belonging to this excellent body was visited by me with more pleasure than their Juvenile Training Institution, at the time of my visit under the charge and management of the Reverend A. Hamilton, a native of Scotland. I enjoyed the advantage of visiting it in the society of the Governor-General, who was desirous of judging for himself of its state and efficiency; and although at the time I did so the premises were in confusion, from the effects of the severe hurricane of the preceding year, and of the building measures in operation to remedy its disastrous effects, I saw enough to impress me with a strong conviction of the utility of such an establishment for supplying the means of illumination in many a dark and desolate corner of the globe, and among many a benighted nation and tribe of the human race. The object of the establishment, which is entirely supported by contributions of the United Brethren, and of their friends—payments by the parents of the children being entirely voluntary—is to bring up native boys in every department of knowledge, at the same time teaching them some manual trade, (in accordance with the usual Moravian discipline, which recognises, in its fullest extent, the dignity as well as the necessity of supporting one's self by one's own labour,) so as to fit and prepare them for being missionaries and clergymen, to proclaim the gospel of

Jesus wherever they may be called, and particularly in tropical regions; thereby supplying not only more labourers for Moravian missions in every part of the world, but saving the funds of the body, a large portion of which is necessarily expended every year in defraying the travelling and other expenses of their teachers and preachers, as they journey from Europe to all parts of the known world, the tropics included. The number of pupils under Mr Hamilton's charge, in the summer of 1849, was seventeen. Their ages varied from six to fourteen years, and they were of all shades, from the face of the fair-white of the northern clime to the coal-black of the genuine African. But colour made no difference, either in their aptitude for learning, or in their treatment by their kind preceptor. Black, brown, and fair, answered the somewhat puzzling questions (for children) put to them by the Governor, &c.; and all were so obviously on an equal footing, that the teacher might fairly have inscribed over the door of his establishment Virgil's celebrated line—

*“Tros Tyriusve mihi nullo discrimine agetur.”*

Of the seventeen boys, ten were from various British possessions in the West Indies, and the rest from the Spanish and Danish colonies; but all of them claimed for themselves the title of Englishman, when asked to what country they belonged.

\* Next to the Moravians, the Wesleyan Methodists are the most numerous body of dissenters in Antigua. They have seven chapels, besides preaching-stations, in

the island, and the largest of their chapels is that in the town of St John's, which is capable of holding two thousand people, and is generally, if not always, filled. I have a very vivid recollection of this large meeting-house, from the fact of its being the first place of worship filled with a black congregation I had ever in my life seen. I visited it on the evening of the very first day I spent in the island, and at the time when, as yet, I was entirely unacquainted with any one in it; and the scene impressed me with all the force of novelty.

Besides the denominations already mentioned, there is a small body of Scotch Presbyterians, who rejoice in one of the most singularly ugly specimens of architecture, in the shape of a church, that it has ever been my fortune to see; and, strangely enough, this unsightly object (which looks like half a church surmounted by a meat safe) occupies the most prominent position about the town—the site of the cathedral not excepted.

The stranger visiting St John's, should certainly visit an institution there, denominated the Soup House—an institution which is, all circumstances considered, one of the most creditable to be found in the West Indies. Like most other establishments in St John's, having for their beneficent object the relief of human want, and the alleviation of human suffering, or the improvement of human nature, this institution is mainly indebted for its origin and foundation, and subsequent progress, to the exertions of the



Rev. Archdeacon Holberton—a clergyman whose beneficent efforts, in the cause of Christian benevolence, all classes in the island agree in eulogising.

The Soup House is so called from its having originated in a humble endeavour to supply soup to the indigent—its origin being so lowly that the first boiling or brewing took place under the shade of a tamarind-tree still in existence. To the soup or kitchen department there has been added an infirmary, a separate sailors' hospital in a different part of the town, and near the sea, and a lazar-house for the reception of patients deformed by that awful species of leprosy which attacks the black population (at least I did not see any white or coloured victims) in these islands. When I visited the institution, there were one hundred and thirty patients in the infirmary and sailors' hospital, and nearly thirty in the lazar-house; but these are of course in addition to the numerous body receiving outdoor relief. The whole expense at present does not much exceed £100 per month, and the means of expenditure are supplied partly by private subscription, and partly by grants from the local legislature.

In connexion with the history of this institution, there is a circumstance which I think worth recording, as strongly illustrative of the truth that man may *propose*, but that it is the Almighty who *disposes* in all matters. The room which forms the place of meeting for the directors or committee of management is a *wooden* one, and the minutes entered in the minute-

book, on the forenoon of the very day on which the great earthquake of 1843 occurred, contains a resolution to the effect that the *timber* building should be replaced by a *stone* one. The earthquake came, however, and confirmed every one in the conviction that wooden erections were safer than stone buildings in such a country. It is unnecessary to say that the resolution of the minute was never carried into effect.

A calm fine day in the tropics is certainly productive of feelings of extreme delight. Where every day, or nearly every day, during the dry season, is clear and fine, it may seem difficult to give a preference to one over another. So thought I, until, in the quietude of a friend's house, in the month of May, in about the centre of the island, I passed a whole forenoon, and nearly a whole day, in contemplating the beautiful calmness and clearness of the scene. Not a cloud in the sky; not a mist on the earth—

“So calm, so pure, it seemed as 'twere  
The bridal of the earth and sky.”

Nothing to break the calm silence of the scene, save the occasional chaunt of a negro band, who were engaged, at some distance, putting up the sails of a windmill, and whose chorus, rude and imperfectly heard as it was, sounded pleasantly in the ear, as the indication of light hearts. Such was one of the days I passed in the country in Antigua, and there were many such passed in the enjoyment of the domestic circle of my friends in that island. But it has been

often before remarked, that not unfrequently it is the time most pleasantly spent that presents fewest occurrences to record.

I have above referred to the earthquake which visited Antigua, and her sister islands of the Leeward group, in the year 1843. Of this awful convulsion, as well as of the severe hurricane which swept over some of the same islands, traces are still to be found in every part of Antigua. Churches blown down, forest-trees uprooted, houses destroyed, and negro huts upturned, prove how fearful these convulsions must have been. Nor will the evidences of its severity seem less, if gathered from the testimonies of the numerous sufferers. Every one you meet with, who was in the island at the time, has something to tell both of the earthquake and of the hurricane ; and the details I heard were such that I was surprised that I had not heard more at home upon the subject, and that greater efforts had not been made, by the home Government and the public, to aid our colonial brethren under these severe dispensations. Sure am I that the treasures of England have been squandered where there was infinitely less of suffering, and infinitely less of claim.

In connexion with the earthquake, I heard an anecdote of a negro overseer, which displayed as much coolness, under circumstances of danger, as any story I ever heard. The earthquake made itself felt by repeated and successive shocks, or shakes, each of some minutes' duration, during which the earth heaved

and seemed to reel, so that it was impossible to stand steady; and many lay down on the ground or floor till the shaking subsided.

During one of the lulls, which were marked by a deep stillness, the proprietor of one of the finest estates in the island rose up, and, as he graphically expressed it, "after steadying himself on his feet," went out to see what injury had been done by the antecedent shocks to the buildings of his sugar-works. On passing one of his cane-fields, he was surprised to find a band of negro girls hoeing canes, under the charge of a negro overseer, who accosted him coolly with the observation—"Bad shake that, Massa," and then turned round to one of the girls who (alarmed by the earthquake) was moving off to some place of imagined safety,—“You, Miss Dina, you come here; you no 'top de shake, ean you?”

To the person fresh from Europe, there is much information, as well as amusement, to be found in watching the peculiarities of the negro character. At least I found it so; and, without meaning to be a eulogiser of the negro and his capabilities, I must say I saw and heard much to satisfy me that the negro race is capable of advancing to a high position in intelligence and civilisation. Centuries of misrule and injustice may require something like centuries of good government and justice to atone for their depreciating and brutalising effects; but already, in the British West India possessions, the negro has proved that he is quite fitted for the exercise of most of the

rights of a freeman. In the legislatures of many of the islands there are already sundry negro members, and in most of them there are to be found many gentlemen of colour, having a large supply of negro blood in their veins, who are in no way inferior, and in some cases superior, to some at least of their white brethren, in the discretion and ability with which they discharge their legislative functions; while, throughout the mass of the negro population, there will be found, if the traveller takes the trouble of investigating for himself, an amount of smartness and intelligence which will in many cases surprise him.

Popular sayings in common use among these descendants of the sons of Africa are oftentimes very amusing. "When cattle\* lose tail, who for brush fly?" is the common negro form for pointing out how essential one person is to another: "Night no hab eye," is the apology for a negro woman's evening dishabille: and "When cockroach gib dance, him no ask fowl," was the explanation given by a negro to a friend and myself, when charged by us with a breach of contract in not getting us an invitation to a "Dignity ball."

\* Throughout the West Indies you seldom hear of a bull, an ox, a cow, &c.; the word is "cattle," used in the singular as well as in the plural.

## CHAPTER IV.

“ Be not afear’d, the Isle is full of noises,  
Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ So freshly fair, and everywhere the features of the scene,  
That earth appears a resting-place where angels might alight,  
As if sorrow ne’er a visitant in human breast had been,  
And the verdure of the summer months had never suffered blight.”—Δ.

LEAVE ANTIGUA—ST CHRISTOPHER’S—CLIMATE AND SCENERY—CENTRAL PATHWAY AND SPOONER’S LEVEL—VISIT TO NEVIS—NATURAL BATHS—LODGING-HOUSE OF NEVIS—COURTS OF LAW—TRIAL BY JURY—MONKEY HILL—CARIB STONE—HURRICANES AND EARTHQUAKES—ISLANDS OF ST EUSTATIA, ST BARTHOLOMEW, SABA, TORTOLA, BORIQUEN OR CRAB ISLAND—ARRIVAL AT ST THOMAS.

It was with much regret—a regret which only the conviction that the further progress in my journeyings was bringing me nearer to the time when I should be privileged to turn my face and steps homewards “from wandering on a foreign strand,” that, at the hour of midnight, I embarked on board the small and very dirty sloop Henrietta, to sail from Antigua to St Kitt’s; and the fact that even at that hour I was accompanied to the boat by sundry kind friends, whose acquaintance had enlivened my stay in the island of

Antigua, and who will ever endear the recollection of it, certainly did not tend to lessen my feelings of depression.

Sailing down through the islands—or, in other words, going in the direction of the trade-wind—is a very easy matter ; and it was therefore, despite the indifferent character of the *Henrietta*, (which certainly would not have been classed A 1 at Lloyds',) that early next forenoon, and after running through the "Narrows," between St Kitt's and Nevis, I came in sight of my destined port of Basseterre, in the truly lovely and romantic little island of St Kitt's.

It had blown somewhat strongly during the night ; and, pent up within the very limited accommodation of the little vessel, I had suffered a few hours of considerable discomfort. But as the day dawned, and brightened into sunshine, any feeling of depression was speedily dispelled. Indeed the scene would have gladdened the heart of an anachorite. The island of Nevis, with its lofty cone-like summit lying on the left ; St Kitt's, with its fertile plains in near view, and the frowning summit of Mount Misery in the background, —a little rocky islet called "Booby Isle" lying between the two, and in the middle of the "Narrows," formed together an inspiring view, particularly as the sea between was studded over with numerous small fishing-boats under sail, the navigators of which displayed no little skill, as, occasionally racing with the *Henrietta*, they glided in and out, with easy swan-like motion, from under the high lands on the coasts of

both the islands of Nevis and St Kitt's. It was thus that we approached and arrived at the island of

#### ST CHRISTOPHER'S, OR ST KITT'S,

Situated sixty miles west of Antigua, in north latitude  $17^{\circ} 15'$ , and west longitude  $63^{\circ} 17'$ , and deriving its name from the circumstance that the devout Colon and his followers saw, or imagined they saw, (which is just the same thing) in the extraordinary shape of the summit of its strangely named principal mountain, "Mount Misery," a resemblance to one man carrying another on his back; while St Christopher is generally painted as a giant carrying our Saviour. Of the population of St Kitt's there has not been any very recent census; but the general estimate of twenty-five thousand cannot be very far from correct. Its contents are about seventy square miles, and with this population, and within these confined limits, St Kitt's contains as many of the elements of attraction as probably any other place within the line of the tropics.

While, of late years, the attention of invalids, both in Europe and in America, seems to have been more directed than formerly to the West Indian Islands as places of sanitary resort, I observe a somewhat prominent place has been assigned to the island of Jamaica. When I come to that part of my journeyings which treats of impressions and experiences in that romantic island, I trust, as I believe, it will not be found that I was insensible to the many beautiful and oftentimes awfully grand scenes with which the "Island of



Springs" so plenteously abounds. But for the present I have to do with the fairy island of St Kitt's; and truth compels me to say that, *tota re.perspectá*, looking back through the whole vista of my journeyings by land and by water, amid the luxuriant scenery of the tropics, my heart dwells upon St Kitt's, and its scenery and society, with a peculiar pleasure and a heartfelt satisfaction. The very first view of the island is exceedingly pleasing and inspiriting. Basseterre, the capital, (for of course every island must have its capital,) is in itself but a poor town, or, if my Kittyfonian (for *that*, it seems, is the generic appellation given to the inhabitants of this isle) friends will forgive the expression, but a poor village; but the valley in which Basseterre lies—there lies the charm! Green velvet is the image that rises to the mind when I would seek to give an idea of the greenness of the lovely vale, at the bottom of which stands the town of Basseterre.

During the occupancy by the French of this part of the island, the town of Basseterre was erected by them, the English capital, "Sandy Point," being at the other end of the island; and the choice of the site of Basseterre, as compared with that of Sandy Point, goes far to justify the Frenchman's sarcasm against my fellow-countrymen, that while nature has given to the children of La Belle Francee her *goût*, she has bequeathed to the sons of Albion only her gout.

Were I to write of the climate and scenery of St Kitt's, according to the impressions that arise as they

are now recalled—were I even to note down the simple memoranda regarding the island, which I find entered in my journal at the time—I fear I would seem to many to be using the language of eulogistic exaggeration. Warm the climate certainly is; hot, oftentimes disagreeably so, at least in the town or in the valley. But *that* the sojourner in the tropics must lay his account with. But during those parts of the months of March and of April when I had the pleasure of sojourning in Government House in the island of St Kitt's, I did not, on any occasion that I remember, or have noted, find the heat very oppressive even in the town or valley. While on the coast, or while riding up the gentle, grassy, verdant acclivities of the mountains, the breeze that constantly blows, or rather plays, around the traveller gives a delicious coolness to the balmy atmosphere, that must be felt to be appreciated. A better place for the winter sojourn of the invalid, whose lungs are too delicate, or too much impaired, to stand the bitter colds and rude blasts of northern climes, cannot possibly be conceived. With the American Madeira Santa Cruz, and the mountain salubrities of Jamaica, fresh in my recollection, I give the preference to St Christopher's; and I trust, ere I close these descriptive sketches, to give at least some justifying grounds for my preference of this island, or of the immediately adjoining islet of Nevis, (and the two may be considered as one in this respect,) as a place of sanitary resort.

But while I write thus of the climate, I would write in still more enthusiastic terms of the scenery of St Kitt's; and, reader, if you believe me not, I pray you read the eloquent description of Coleridge, and if you deny credence to us both, then I pray you make some apology for going to judge for yourself; for, rest assured that, until you have seen "Nine-turn Gut," in the island of St Christopher's, and some of the deep and thickly wooded glens of this enchanting island, you have not seen some of the finest portions and most romantic scenes in this fair world of ours.

It is not my intention to attempt anything like a detailed description of the scenery which excited these observations. Description is not my *forte*. But there is one part of the island I cannot permit myself to refrain from describing; and I am the more disposed to note down its memorabilia, from the fact that the writer I have already alluded to, Mr Henry Nelson Coleridge, expresses his exceeding regret that he had not been able to find time to visit it.

The scenery alluded to is that which presents itself in the course of the ride through and across the mountains, near the centre of the island, and which leads the visitor into a very remarkable flat plain, situated in the midst of the hill country, at an elevation of at least two thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea. This plain is said by Coleridge (on report) and others, to be similar in its character to the plains between the Cordilleras of Upper Peru. In this place most of the fruits and vegetables of Europe may be

and have been grown. The plain referred to rejoices in the cognomen of "Spooner's Level;" and to understand the characteristic features of the beautiful and romantic ride which leads you through it, the following short description of the formation of the island is necessary.

The interior of St Kitt's may be said to be composed of a mountain, or rather of a congeries of mountains, drawing towards a centre and an apex, which latter is formed by the frowning crag and summit of "Mount Misery." Towards this mount of evil name, the wood-crowned summits tend in every direction—split, splintered, and separated by deep fissures, chasms, rents, and glens—some of them with streamlets flowing at their bottoms, deep hid by the foliage from human vision, and only found to be existing by the trickling sound, or by the boy's expedient of throwing down a stone and counting the moments ere the splash indicates its arrival at the water. In crossing these ravines, so as to pass right through the island, from the one side of it to the other, by the narrow bridle-path which formed the line of demarcation during the joint occupation of England and of France, it is necessary to wind, by an extremely tortuous course, up and down the sides of these ravines—all parts of these ravines (as indeed is nearly the whole congeries of mountains) being clothed and covered by a great variety of trees of great height, and generally of the most gigantic proportions. The mango, silk cotton-tree, bread-tree, bread-nut tree, palms of various

kinds, caeao and cocoa-nut trees, tamarind-tree, red and white cedars, and a host of other tropical forest trees and flowering shrubs, clothe, crest, and adorn the mountain sides almost to their very summits, and the deep dells to their very lowest and innermost recesses—affording ample hiding-places for the various members of the monkey tribe, which are numerous in St Kitt's, and which may occasionally be seen, at different points, as they scamper off on the signal being given by the sentinel or fogleman, who is first seen, being stationed by the general troop to give timely warning of approaching danger. Apropos of monkeys. It is not easy to disabuse the negro of the conviction that the monkey is not endowed with powers of reason, similar, if not equal, to those of man. Sambo may not now carry his views the length of maintaining that the monkey's refusal to make use of the gift of speech proceeds from the fear that, if he spoke, Massa would set him to work; but on several occasions I have heard the negro and coloured boatmen ascribe to the monkey tribe powers of memory and of reason little short of human. Indeed it is difficult to hear such tales, oft repeated and seemingly authenticated, without admitting that this "caricature on humanity" trenches in some degree on man's "high prerogative" of reason. That the monkeys bury their dead in regularly prepared graves, and that they even attend to funeral processions and obsequies, as men do, is a statement I have oftentimes heard made, and attempted to be authenticated by the averment

that the assertor had seen them engaged in the "duty," as well as enforced by the argument that the dead body of a monkey is never seen in the woods. Another equally prevalent belief is, that if the tribe is offended in any way by a particular party, they will find out that particular person's ground, and under cloud of night root up his sweet potatoes, and otherwise despoil his possessions. At all events, one fact is well known, and it is this, that the gestures of an irate monkey are very much those of an angry man, and as emphatically, and by the same signs, indicate a hope and an intention of future revenge. A friend with whom I had been staying had some time previously shot a young monkey, and he described the threatening attitudes of the mother, shaking her fist and otherwise plainly promising an hour of retributive justice, as something very like the actions of a human being.

But to return to the scenery of the ride to "Spooner's Level." Mention has been already made of the variety and magnificence of the trees and shrubs. Some of these have been referred to by their names or kinds. It were, however, to leave out one of the characteristics of the scene, not to make special mention of the tree or tree-like ferns, although many of my readers may feel some surprise at finding these classed among the genus "arbor." Whether the ferns belonged to the vegetable or to the woody kingdom, they formed very striking objects in the scenery under description, and fully and ably sustained the character of forest trees. They were occasionally seen sepa-

rately, but much more frequently in thick groves, standing like palm-trees—

“With feathery tufts like plumage rare;”

their stems of fifteen to eighteen inches thick, and reaching to a height of fifty or sixty feet, with their branching tops covering over the head, like an umbrella. Nor are these trees or tree-like ferns only beautiful; they are also occasionally applied to useful purposes. The wood, though soft, is durable, and makes tolerable supports when the weight to be borne is not very great. They are also sometimes used for fences.

About midway between the two sides of the island is the place I have already mentioned as “Spooner’s Level”—a plain, or rather two plains, each of several hundred acres in extent, covered with excellent pasture, interspersed here and there with patches of “guava bushes,” and, being at the elevation before stated, luxuriating in a climate of a cool temperature, the luxury of which can only be fully appreciated by those who have been previously broiled by the mid-day heat of the plains below.

I was told that, not many years ago, this spot had been chosen by an island resident, as the location where to spend his “honeymoon;” and, solitary and rather inaccessible as it was, I thought the selection argued no small amount of good taste, either on the part of the lady fair or of the gentleman, or perchance of both.

The pathway up to "the level," and again down to the road on the other side, is narrow, and sometimes a little difficult without being dangerous. The hurricane of 1848, the vestiges of which are to be seen in most of the islands forming the Leeward group, had blown down some of the forest trees, and thrown them across the road; and, to overcome these obstructions, it was on two occasions necessary for myself and friend, Mr R——, to take the saddles off the horses, and cause the animals almost to creep through beneath the trunks of the trees that stretched across the road. On clearing the woods, and at various parts of the ride, there is to be seen one of the most beautiful marine views which the mind can conceive. The islands of Antigua, Montserrat, Nevis, St Eustatia, Saba, St Martin's, and St Bartholomew, all reposing in the bosom of the clear tropic sea; that sea generally in a state of heaving quietude, and the whole enlivened with ships under sail, seen here and there in near view, or on the very verge of the far-off horizon.

Having descended from the level on the other side by a tortuous mountain-path, a ride of eight miles or so takes the tourist to Basseterre; or, turning to the left, he will be well repaid by riding round the island by the shores of Deep Bay, and through the town of Sandy Point; and thence onwards to Basseterre, passing by and under the romantic rock of Brimstone Hill, on which the fortifications and garrisons are placed.

Among the chief recommendations of St Kitt's,



as a place of temporary residence for the invalid, I reckon its vicinity to the island of

## NEVIS,

Situated in north latitude  $17^{\circ} 14'$ , and west longitude  $63^{\circ} 3'$ ; somewhat less than half the size, and containing less than a moiety of the population, of St Christopher's. The chief town of Nevis, Charlestown, is exactly eleven miles from Basseterre, and the latter is just about the same distance from Sandy Point, the other town in St Kitt's. Basseterre is therefore fairly situated for being a centre and capital for both islands; and the fact that two small islands, so situated, should each have its separate machinery of government, does strike the mind of a stranger as something very unnecessary, and unnecessarily expensive, if not absurd. The Governor of Nevis is called the President, while St Kitt's is worthily presided over by a Lieutenant-governor, both being under the general government of the Leeward island group. But both islands have their respective houses of assembly, with relative staffs; and, without offence to the inhabitants of Nevis, I trust I may record it as my opinion—as well as an opinion I have heard generally expressed, even in influential quarters—that it were impossible to imagine a more obvious reformation than to merge the assembly and courts of Nevis in those of St Kitt's, one lieutenant-governor presiding over both.

A sail of a couple of hours brings the voyager from

Basseterre to Charlestown in Nevis; and after inspecting the town, (which is certainly a poor affair, and will not occupy much time,) the visitor will probably, if not naturally, direct his attention to the mineral hot-water baths, and the boarding establishment connected with them. These are situated about a mile to the south of Charlestown; and, before setting out to visit them, the invalid visitor should first, if he can, provide himself with a horse—walking exercise in the tropics being but seldom agreeable to the European, or at least to the invalid one. These hot mineral baths are two in number: the largest and hottest being in size about twenty-one feet long by fifteen feet broad, and of a temperature of about 100° Fahrenheit, and the smallest and coldest being somewhat less, and its temperature about 50°. Both are beautifully and transparently clear, and have a singular power of giving a semblance of whiteness, and even beauty, such as is ascribed by Sir Francis Head, in his amusing and able work, entitled *Bubbles from the Brunnens of Nassau*, to some of the German spas. Being warm, they are neither of them of much density; and the water, which may be drunk as well as bathed in, has an agreeable flavour, and leaves an impression on the palate such as one would expect from drinking boiled soda-water. These baths are much lauded for the cure or alleviation of rheumatic complaints, and much resorted to for all sorts and descriptions of ailments. I felt, particularly when in the hottest of them, an elevation of spirits which was singularly pleasant, and which

left an agreeable effect—a feeling of having had strength imparted to my frame for all the rest of the day.

After leaving the baths, and paying (if not a resident in the lodging-house mentioned below) the moderate charge of four bits, or 1s. 4d. for the very luxurious enjoyment, the attention of the visitor, who is here for the first time, will probably be next attracted to the lodging-house erected in the immediate vicinity, and of which the bathing establishment is an appendage. This lodging-house is a large massive stone building, calculated and fitted to accommodate about fifty boarders. It was built when slavery was in existence; and although the fact of slaves being employed in its erection renders it somewhat difficult to ascertain the real amount expended in its construction, it is said that at least £30,000 was so spent; and the statement will not appear at all incredible to any one who has visited it and noted its extent. The building has, however, obviously been erected on a scale much too ambitious. It was built, in its present gigantic proportions, by its first proprietor—a Mr Huggins—probably under the idea that the celebrity of the mineral baths, and the salubrity of the climate of the island, might attract visitors from all parts of the Archipelago—making the island of Nevis what it has some pretensions to be considered, the Montpelier of the West Indies. If such were the hopes of the enterprising founder of the lodging-house and bathing-establishment of Nevis, they have been grievously disappointed. I could not

learn that, at any time, the mammoth lodging-house was a prosperous establishment. In the present almost ruined condition of the island, and under the depressing influences which have, especially since 1846, spread their baleful effects over the British West India possessions, I only found the Nevis lodging-house and baths in the condition I ought to have expected, when I found them in a semi-ruinous and nearly deserted state. Still I was not prepared for the scene of desolation they exhibited. With all nature smiling around, and looking to the many attractions for rich invalids which this lovely islet presented, I was deeply impressed with the conviction that the ruined condition of such an establishment furnished a practical commentary on the wisdom of that policy which, in the first place, paid twenty millions sterling, or thereby, to put down slavery in our own colonies, and then encouraged other powers, less scrupulous, to continue to encourage slavery, by allowing productions, so produced and manufactured, to compete in our home markets with commodities produced and manufactured by the hands of freemen.

Notwithstanding, however, its present state, the lodging-house of Nevis and its adjacent baths offer a very tempting location for an invalid or other visitor; and with the aid of a servant, and the society of a companion, an invalid might here make himself or herself very comfortable, even for a stay of many months' duration. Indeed I was, during my stay in Nevis, much struck with its attractions as a place of

sanitary resort; and most heartily did I agree with an official friend, of high rank, when he observed, with reference to the temporary residence of her Majesty—the late lamented Queen-dowager of England—in the island of Madeira, that were those whose finances could afford it to devote a few hundreds to introducing the elements of comfort into the lodging-house in Nevis, they would find it a fully more healthful location than the more frequented island of the north. Nor will the remark seem extravagant to any one who has visited Nevis. While the greater length of the voyage gives it an advantage over its more popular rival—inasmuch as it seems now generally conceded that the sea voyage, particularly when the sail is on the summer sea of the West Indian Archipelago at the proper season, and under the benign influence of the tropical breezes, has a most beneficial effect in the cure of many complaints, particularly of pulmonary ones—the beauties of Nevis, as an island, are no whit inferior to those of Madeira. Its valleys are as fertile, and its hills as grand; and it is uniformly verdant and beautiful, even in its present depressed condition. From the smallness of its size, as well as from the height of its hills, it enjoys, for the greater part of the year, a climate comparatively cool, and of acknowledged salubrity. In fine, I feel it is only discharging a duty I owe to others to testify my conviction of the fact, that few places on the globe furnish a more advantageous retreat for parties labouring under pulmonary complaints, than does this self-same island of Nevis, with

its overgrown lodging-house, and its delightful, invigorating, and transparent mineral hot baths.

But it is right that I should add that in no case should the invalid be allowed to come to the West Indies, without previous preparation being made for his, and (especially) for *her* reception—a caution which I the more readily add, because, according to my own experience, it is but too much neglected in cases where the advice to go abroad is given. There is naturally, in the newness as well as distance of the scene, much that is calculated to depress; and this depression is oftentimes so much aggravated by the feeling of being *alone among strangers*, that I have known, within the limits of my own personal knowledge, several cases where I was satisfied that the patient had suffered more from depression of spirits in the tropical climate, than he or she would, in all probability, have done from the disease in the northern one: to which add a fact that truth compels me to mention, and the mention of which my West Indian friends will forgive, that at first sight, at least, West Indian mansions—particularly those of the class of *domi publici*—have to an English eye an appearance which is waste and comfortless, and which is calculated to strike a chill into the heart of one debilitated by bodily suffering. In every case where it is practicable, I would therefore recommend, that the patient visiting the West Indies on account of health should be preceded or accompanied by a European servant; and, at least in the case of a lady, that they should also have a

friend with them. The very feeling that death might arrive in a foreign land, far from friends and home, often tends to work out the fatal result. With such adjuncts to comfort and happiness as I have mentioned, however, I cannot conceive a better location for the weak, languid sufferer, than this lovely islet of the Caribbean Sea, or (for its near vicinity makes them almost one) its somewhat larger neighbour, the island of St Kitt's. Even Coleridge says, when writing of Nevis, that he would often "run down the trades and *winter* within the tropics," although he would prefer Madeira for a continued residence, on account of its vicinity to England. He adds, that he was "partly engaged to marry a lady in Madcira, when he and she came to the years of discretion." Having no such cogent reason as that last mentioned, to influence my resolve, I may be pardoned for claiming for Nevis at least an equality of attractions.

On leaving the baths, and again mounting his steed, (if he has the good fortune to have one,) the visitor will find himself in excellent condition for a ride round part of or through the island—visiting the Banyan tree described by various travellers, or such other scenes as his own or friends' taste may induce him to visit; before setting out to do which, he may, perchance, have his sense of the proprieties somewhat violated, by observing a number of black and coloured women standing in the stream of hot water, as it escapes from the baths, washing clothes in this caldron of nature's heating: themselves the while, if not exactly

*in puris naturalibus*, at least somewhat too scantily attired for European notions of decency.

Nevis, like her other sister islands, received her name from the great Colon—

“Who scanned Columbia through the wave;”

and various are the accounts given of the reasons that induced the choice of such a name. The then existence of a volcano, now extinct, is the supposition of Edwards; and other accounts equally erudite are given of the matter. One occurred to myself, which, if not the sound one, seems to me to have at least as much probability or plausibility in it as the rest. When first visiting this island, both when going and returning, and again on numberless other occasions, when looking at it as well from the sea as from the neighbouring island of St Christopher's, I observed a large fleecy white cloud, which, like a canopy, encircled the summit, about the centre of the island of Nevis; and so often did this appearance present itself, and so truly did it merit for the hills on which it rested, the

“*Candidum nive*”

assigned by Horace as a characteristic of Mount Soracte, that I could not avoid the conviction that such a semblance, seen by Columbus and his fellow voyagers, accounted satisfactorily for their thus naming this island of the tropics by a name suggestive of snow. At all events, there was something of interest in thus throwing the mind back into the past, and



attempting to fathom, in any respect, the motives that influenced the great discoverer, and to suppose that the sight which greets you was the same or similar to the one seen

“When first his drooping sails Columbus furl’d,  
And sweetly rested in another world.”

When writing of Antigua, I have had occasion to speak of the state of the Church in these islands of the Leeward group; and that in so doing I used terms of unqualified praise, is only due to the high standing for learning, piety, and zeal of the body of reverend gentlemen, who are now to be found discharging the pastoral office in the British West India colonies. But if an anecdote I once heard in Nevis be well founded, there must have been a time when such praise would have been misplaced. There was unquestionably a time when, not only in impetuous Erin, but in most other parts of Great Britain and her possessions, the pistol was supposed to be, at least for laymen, the most appropriate weapon for deciding questions of right and wrong. That this “code of honour” was ever acted on by the clergy in the mother country, I have never heard; but, if the tale I heard be true, it seems that the impetuosity of the Creole blood had induced some one of their colonial brethren to improve upon the general practice, and, when contradicted by a reverend brother on some questions of Grecian or other antiquities, to offer to bring the matter to the usual arbitrament of the pistol. The epistle in which

the challenge was given was a simple intimation of the offence, and challenge to meet at or near Brimstone hill. But alas for the "chance of war!" The blood of the respondent was either cooler, or his feeling of propriety, common sense, and religion stronger; and, perceiving the absurdity of the whole affair, his answer, endorsed on the belligerent note, was simply, "Reverend Sir, I am sorry I cannot gratify you. In point of fact, I was born a coward, and bred a parson." The date of this deathblow to duelling, at least in the church, was not given. No doubt, "'twas a long time ago;" but I thought the story worth recording, were it only because it is one which, if it ever did happen, will certainly never happen again.

In Antigua, and again in St Kitt's, I had opportunities of seeing on several occasions the courts of law sitting for the discharge of judicial business, both civil and criminal. The barristers who practise in the colonies generally practise also as solicitors or attorneys. Such is likewise the case in the United States of America. In Great Britain, and particularly I think in Scotland, there is a prevalent impression that the ends of justice are promoted by the separation of the legal profession into its two branches of solicitors and attorneys, and barristers or advocates, and making the practice of the one branch incompatible with that of the other. That this separation oftentimes makes the obtaining of justice, by means of law, a much more costly affair than it otherwise would be, is very obvious. But if, by such division, a purer legal atmosphere, so to speak,

is obtained, it cannot be said that the enhanced cost of the article is money thrown away. I cannot, however, agree in the opinion that the division alluded to is essential, or even of importance to the ends of justice. Such had long been my opinion formed on principles applicable to the state of matters in the mother country. For other reasons, to detail which would be out of place here, I would regard the breaking down of the division I have referred to as a matter to be regretted. But I certainly cannot see how the division itself in any way tends to purity of judicial procedure; and my own experience in the West Indian colonies, and in the United States of America, confirmed the opinions I had formed in this respect: while, as regards the solicitor-barristers of the West Indies, I can most honestly confirm the statement of an earlier writer, that there is among them the same abstinence from irregular interruption, the same urbanity to each other, and the same cheerful obedience to that decision which the constitution of the country makes binding on them, which severe critics have predicated of the junior (he might have also said "and senior") barristers of the mother land. Were I disposed to be critical, I might add that the only thing I thought objectionable was the number of "counsel" engaged on either side. In a case of ejectment, involving pecuniary value of somewhat inconsiderable amount, I saw no less than four gentlemen of the long robe engaged for the prosecution, while an equal number conducted the defence. This must add much

to the costliness of the verdict ; but this fault is one which is too often committed at home, to justify any severity of criticism towards our colonial brethren. With the exception of the wig, which is dispensed with both by bench and bar in the West Indies, for the very obvious reason that the heat of the climate would render the use of it insupportable, the advocates in these colonies are robed and otherwise dressed like their brethren at home ; and the whole judicial procedure is conducted much in the same way—even to the occasional exhibition either of an unaccountable amount of credulity, or of incredulity, on the part of the “gentlemen of the jury” impannelled to try a civil cause, or inquire into a crime. Here the English rule, requiring unanimity on the part of the members of the jury, prevails ; and the effect is to produce some odd scenes of acquittal, in the face of evidence amounting almost to demonstration. Such results must occasionally be produced by the adoption of a rule like this, particularly in places inhabited by mixed races, and where strong prejudices of colour and otherwise interfere to obscure perception or to warp the judgment. And although the Scottish system to which I had been most accustomed has some disadvantages, I felt that it would be better to allow a majority to rule, rather than permit the common sense but weaker stomachs and powers of endurance of the many, to be overcome by the headstrong prejudices, bull-headed obstinacy, and ability for fasting of the few. There may be some plausible objections to allowing the

question of crime or no crime to be decided by a bare majority of twelve men ; but assuredly there are more objections to allowing the conscientious opinions of eleven, to be overruled by the dishonesty or bigotry of one, whose powers of endurance enable him to withstand the effects of fasting and confinement for an unusually great length of time.

Among the memorabilia of St Kitt's, I find in my note-book honourable mention made of a somewhat singular stone, which is to be seen almost on the very summit of a remarkable and singularly beautiful hill, called by the more appropriate than euphonious name of Monkey Hill ; which hill may be said to form the southern termination of the range which traverses the island. Monkey Hill is in itself a verdant object, with green, and consequently beautiful, cane-fields or brakes, extending to its very base ; and on the summit of it stands the large stone referred to, in form and shape something like a cradle, and having part of the top hollowed out, so as to give countenance to the legend that it was used by the fierce Caribs (who inhabited these islands at and after the date of their discovery by Columbus) for the immolation and burning of their human sacrifices.

Brimstone Hill, on which the British Government has erected a very strong and handsome fort, is another object of interest, situated as it is on the sea-shore, detached from the contiguous mountains, and precipitous on all sides save that of its approach. And the " salt ponds" to be seen in the southern extremity of the

island, and to which the readiest, if not the only, access is by sea, should not be left unvisited.

Neither in St Christopher's nor in Nevis (if I except the lodging-house of the latter) did I observe so many marks of the ravages of the earthquake of 1843, or of the hurricane of 1848, as I had previously done in Antigua. But both suffered, and suffered greatly—so greatly, that I feel sure that, had the extent of loss thereby occasioned to the already previously depressed planters and proprietors been accurately and generally known in the mother country, some special aid would have been granted to lessen the amount of suffering and repair the damage sustained.

It is certainly paying a fearful price and penalty for their loveliness of climate, that the West Indian Islands, and especially the Caribbean Islands, should be so frequently visited by these scourges of nature—the hurricane and the earthquake. And after listening to the many interesting details I heard during my temporary sojourn in these islands, I felt more fully able to appreciate the lines of the poet,—

“Oft o'er the Eden Islands of the west,  
In floral pomp and verdant beauty drest,  
Roll the dark clouds of heaven's awakened ire;  
Thunder and earthquake, whirlwind, flood and fire,  
Midst reeling mountains, and departing plains,  
Tell the pale world “the God of vengeance reigns.”

Although hurricanes such as have devastated these islands are fortunately of very rare occurrence—so rare as to permit the hope that the visitation of 1848 may prove the last for many years—yet, during the months

of July, August, and September, such is the tendency to sudden storms, that these months are characterised as the hurricane months; these hurricanes, it is generally supposed, being caused by a rarefaction of the air produced by the previously-existing great heat, and the colder air of the surrounding region rushing in to fill up the vacuum.

During my stay in St Kitt's—where I had the good fortune to enjoy the superior comforts and society of Government House, and the kind hospitality of the Lieutenant-Governor, his Excellency Robert Mackintosh, a gentleman himself distinguished, and the son of the late eminently distinguished jurist and single-minded statesman, Sir James Mackintosh (as well as the editor of his works)—the island was visited by the British naval squadron, carrying the flag of Lord Dundonald; and also by an American war frigate, the *Germantown*, and by a Dutch vessel of war. Taking advantage of such opportunities, or of the opportunities afforded by the numerous small vessels trading among the islands, the visitor may, from St Kitt's, visit the neighbouring smaller islands of St Eustatius, St Bartholomew, and Saba—returning to St Kitt's and taking the English steamer, or such other opportunity as may occur, to run downwards to St Thomas and onwards on his route to the north. If as fortunate in point of weather as I was, the sail from St Kitt's to St Thomas cannot be otherwise than productive of much gratification. Leaving Saba and St Bartholomew, &c., on the right, the sail is up to and among the Virgin islands, past

Virgin Gorda, and into the Bay of Roadtown in the island of Tortola, where the steamer touches and lands her mails. At the time I visited the scene, it was in the bright light of a summer morning—the sea was calm and the wind at rest ; but in a dark night, and in tempestuous weather, I could easily understand that it would require some considerable skill in navigation to guide a vessel safely through such and so many difficulties. But all danger is now avoided, in so far at least as the steamships are concerned, by timing their arrivals at such places, and by taking the outside passage when the night is dark or the sea rough.

Of these numerous islands of the Virgin group—which belong partly to Denmark and partly to England, and of which there are said to be no less than thirty, including small as well as large—the island of

#### TORTOLA

is the chief. It belongs to England, and is in length about eighteen miles by about seven in breadth, and contains a population exceeding ten thousand inhabitants.

Among these Virgin islands, but standing a little apart from the rest, between the Danish islands of St Thomas and Santa Cruz, and in west longitude  $64^{\circ} 35'$  and north latitude  $18^{\circ}$ , there is to be found a large island, known in the locality by the cognomen of Crab Island, but laid down in the maps as the Isle of Boriquen, of which I was destined to hear a good



deal, but which I found no opportunity of visiting, although I much desired to do so. This island is nearly as large as Santa Cruz, and is said to be exceedingly fertile. In the Gazetteers it is generally laid down as uninhabited; but this is not strictly correct. In former days, when this group of islands formed the headquarters of piracy, Boriquen or Crab Island was the abode, from time to time, of different bands of buccaneers or rovers; and many are the dreadful tales that are told as to the scenes of which this Crab Island (so called from the large number of land-crabs found in it) was the theatre. Of late years, the mode of its occupation has been scarcely less obnoxious. Even now, it cannot be said to have any fixed population; and being claimed, or understood to be claimed, by Great Britain, by Spain, and by Denmark, the chief use made of it is by slavers, who occasionally resort to it under the pretence of watering, but in reality to tranship their supplies, dispose of their cargoes of slaves, or elude the vigilance of the British cruisers. Infinitely better were it that it were in the possession and government of England or even of Denmark, now that the latter has followed the example of England in emancipating her slaves. At present it is a comparative wilderness, and misused for the vilest of purposes—the traffic in human flesh. Under proper government, Boriquen or Crab Island might support a population nearly as large as that of Santa Cruz, in circumstances of comfort.

After leaving Tortola, the next place at which the

English steamer touches is the well-known Danish island of St Thomas. But the approach to a place so “famed in story,” and the property of another and a friendly power, deserves, and will from me receive, a separate chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

“ Vines with climbing branches growing,  
Plants with goody burthens bowing.”

SHAKSPEARE.

“ To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,  
Traces of Eden are still seen below ;  
Where mountain, river, forest, field and grove,  
Remind him of his Maker's power and love.”

COWPER.

ST THOMAS—TOWN OF ST THOMAS—APPEARANCE FROM SEA—VIEW FROM  
SUMMIT OF MOUNTAIN—ADAPTATION FOR PIRACY—VISIT TO SANTA  
CRUZ—ROADS AND PALM-TREES IN SANTA CRUZ—CHRISTIANSTADT  
AND FREDERICKSTADT—INSURRECTION OF 1848, AND EMANCIPATION  
OF SLAVES. REFLECTIONS ON FORMER PROSPERITY, PRESENT STATE,  
AND FUTURE PROSPECTS OF SANTA CRUZ—RETURN TO ST THOMAS.

THE Danish island of

### ST THOMAS

Is situated in longitude  $65^{\circ} 26'$  west, and in latitude  $18^{\circ} 22'$  north. The capital, indeed the only town in the island, is also called St Thomas; and I question if there be, within the West Indian Archipelago, (and those who have visited these islands know how extensive a catalogue of beauty these words comprehend,) a scene more exquisite than is the view of the town and bay of St Thomas, as seen either from the sea, or as viewed from the summit of the hill rising immediately above the town. The view from seaward was

seen by me first, and it certainly was singularly beautiful. The bay at the head of which the town lies is almost eircular, the entrance being by a neck guarded by two forts. In front of you lies the clean, bright town, situated at the bottom of the bay, on the acclivities, and in the ravines, formed by the three limbs of a hill about twelve hundred feet high, which rises immediately from the shore. Although in reality built in the form of a square, or rather of a parallelogram, the spectator, in approaching the town of St Thomas from the sea, has the impression that this exceedingly pretty town is built in that of three triangles—an appearance which arises from the fact that, as you thus approach it, you only see those parts that are built on the three projecting limbs of the hill, those parts lying in the ravines being for a time hid from view. The effect is very pleasing. The hills behind, the numerous red roofs, the white houses, and the general appearance (at some distance) of the cultivation, give St Thomas' something of the aspect of the town of Funchal, in the island of Madeira; and if the greater grandeur of the hill, at the bottom of which the capital of the "flor d'oceano" stands, gives it the advantage in this respect, St Thomas' has infinitely the advantage in point of regularity, order, and, above all, in an attention to cleanliness.

The importance of St Thomas', as a place of trade and commerce, is too well known to justify extended reference to it here. It is pre-eminently a mereantile town. Indeed, if the shortness of my residence within

it would justify criticism at all, I would say that it is only the fact of its being so, of its inhabitants being too entirely devoted to the crush and turmoil of business, that forms an objection to it as a place of tropical sojourn. St Thomas' is what is called a free port, nearly every description of goods being admitted at one uniform rate of duty, which is small, being little more than one per cent. Except during the temporary occupation of the island by England, from 1807 till 1814, St Thomas' has for a long time been in the possession of Denmark. The town possesses a news-room, an ice-house, several churches of imposing structure, and a boarding-house on a somewhat gigantic scale. But, as above mentioned, its distinguishing characteristics are as a place of trade,—a fact evinced by no circumstance more strongly than by the great number and large extent of the stores of the merchants, and the immense piles of valuable merchandise which they are seen to contain. The merchants of St Thomas' have long enjoyed, and continue to enjoy, a large amount of prosperity ; and their hospitalities are on a scale commensurate with their wealth and importance.

In the interior of the island, or even by riding round about as well as through it, there is not much to be seen. The time occupied, however, in so seeing it, is not long, and the visitor should on no account leave the island without having once at least, if not much oftener, enjoyed the very splendid panoramic view which is to be had from the summit of the hill which stands over the town. Through the kindness of his

Excellency Von Oxholm, the Lieutenant-governor of St Thomas', to whom I was favoured with an introduction, and whose courtesy and kindness I have sincere pleasure in thus acknowledging, I was enabled to visit the interior of the island on the back of a good English hunter. I had previously ascended the mountain immediately above the town, and enjoyed the magnificent panoramic view I have before alluded to. Below, and in the immediate foreground, lay the town of St Thomas, with the numerous shipping in the harbour and at the landing-places, and the clean Danish forts, with the flag of Denmark conspicuous from their flag-staffs; a little beyond, the calm clear sea, with numerous sails cruising in every direction; an archipelago of islets lying scattered around, reposing on the bosom of the mighty deep; and the verdant island of Santa Cruz in the distance; and the still larger island of Porto Rico, seen dimly and as a cloud on the verge of the horizon, all combined to form one of the finest sea views that it has been my good fortune to witness in any part of the world. During my ten days' stay in St Thomas', I visited the scene several times, and on each occasion was more and more impressed with its beauty. Indeed, when but a short way up the hill, and when enjoying the hospitalities of my kind friends Messrs M——n senior and junior, Mr C——ie, &c. in their luxurious retreats, perched, almost like nests, a considerable way up the acclivity on which part of the town is built—I was daily enchanted with the loveliness of the scene as it exhibited

itself from the windows, even at that height. But, to see it in full perfection, the summit of the mountain must be attained. One thing struck me forcibly, and now recurs vividly to my recollection ; and it is the remarkable clearness of the water in the creeks or inlets with which the shores of St Thomas' are indented all around, and which, in days now happily gone by, (and, thanks to the power of steam, never likely to return,) offered places of convenient retreat to the numerous pirates who infested these seas and islands. When standing at an elevation of certainly not less than five or six hundred feet above the level of the sea, I could discern large fish, as they swam about far down in the depths of the lagoon—such was the clearness both of the atmosphere and of the water.

On the occasion on which I was politely allowed by the governor the use of his stud, I proceeded, accompanied by one of his Excellency's servants, right through and round a great part of the island. Although, on the whole, St Thomas' is certainly a very arid spot—affording, in this respect, a strong contrast to the larger Danish island of Santa Cruz, to be immediately described—I found much, in the course of this ride, which I would not have wished to leave unvisited. The gigantic cactus and aloe, growing in all the wild freedom of untamed and unchecked nature—the former attaining the height of thirty feet and upwards, and many of the latter having stems of twelve and even fifteen feet high—and the numerous other tropical shrubs and trees, luxuriating as it were in the most

fantastic shapes and conformations, constituted a scene of much novelty if not of great interest. Again was I struck with the adaptation of St Thomas' for the villanies of piracy. In these numerous lagoons, bays, and inlets—most of them clothed thickly to and over the waters' edge by the deadly, dark-green mangrove—and in the numerous rocks and reefs which line the shore, the marauder had a ready place of concealment before, as well as of retreat after, the attack. The days of piracy in these seas are, however, now numbered among the things that were. At least attempts of a piratical nature are extremely rare. But only a few years ago, some relics or reminiscences of the infamous trade might have been seen in this island, in the skeleton remains of parties, who had been condemned for piracy at St Thomas', bleaching in the sun, as a warning to others who might be disposed to adopt similar courses.

On returning from this ride, I had the pleasure of seeing the scenery I have already described—viz. the view from the brow of the hill at the bottom of which the town is built—under a new phase, namely, under the influence of a tropical sunset.

The English mail steam-packet does not call at the other larger and more beautiful, as well as much more productive Danish island of

#### ST CROIX, OR SANTA CRUZ.

But there are opportunities of visiting it to be had from St Thomas' (from which it is distant about forty



miles) at least twice a-week, by excellent sailing packets trading regularly for the conveyance of passengers and goods, at a very moderate charge. Sure am I that the stranger who visits St Thomas', and leaves the Archipelago without also visiting Santa Cruz, will have great reason to regret his doing so. Santa Cruz, or St Croix, as it is more frequently called, lies about forty miles to the south-east of St Thomas, in longitude  $65^{\circ} 28'$  west, and latitude  $17^{\circ} 45'$  north. The island is about thirty miles long by eight or ten miles broad. It is extremely fertile, and very verdant and beautiful; so that it has been not inaptly termed the "garden of the West Indies." From the salubrity of the island, and its convenience of access from the shores of the great republic of the United States, it is much visited by the Americans as a place of sanitary resort; and, in a very comfortable boarding-house at Fredericksstadt, St Croix, (Mrs Rodgers') I found several invalids from the United States of America sojourning for the benefit of their health. Nor would it be easy to point out a location better adapted for the restoration of the pulmonary patient. The climate is warm, but by no means enervatingly so; and, save during the middle of the day—when, of course, the visitor for health and pleasure is under no necessity to expose himself or herself to the unmitigated influence of the sun's rays—I did not find the heat at all oppressive or unpleasant; while the verdure of the scenery—which,

even at the time of my visit, and although the island was then suffering from a three months' drought, had a much fresher appearance than almost any of the islands I had yet visited—was exceedingly remarkable. The great beauty and excellence of the roads; the superiority and general excellence of the society; and the salubrity of the sea-breeze, which is almost constantly blowing, are additional circumstances of inducement to make Santa Cruz a place of general resort. Indeed the excellence of the roads which coast the island and traverse it in every direction, is perhaps the chief, or at least the most striking of the characteristics of St Croix. Good roads are not very common in the West Indian Islands. Indeed, as a general rule, the roads are very bad; and it is therefore with the more pleasure and surprise that the unprepared visitor enjoys the luxury of travelling over the smooth avenue-like roads of this verdant island: particularly as, in so doing, he will find himself in many of his drives overshadowed and protected, at least in a measure, from the glowing heat of the sun, by the tall branching palms, growing sometimes in single and oftentimes in double rows, on either side of the smoothly gravelled way; and which seem, as you look forward to them in a straight, vista-like view, like the pillars supporting the approach to some gigantic cathedral. Such rides, particularly when along the sea-coast, and where the soft, balmy, tropical sea-breeze can be felt blowing, or rather breathing,

round the frame, are associated with a feeling of luxurious pleasure which must be seen and felt to be appreciated. And, during my too brief stay in this garden-like island, I enjoyed, through the kindness of my friends, Messrs L——, K——, N——, &c., many opportunities for such enjoyment.

Although a Danish settlement, and the chief possession of Denmark in the West Indies, yet St Croix has a great number of English, and also some German residents, and a considerable part of the island belongs to natives of my own country—of Scotland—whom the enlightened policy of Denmark has induced to settle here. The island is presided over by a Governor-general, assisted by a Council; and I had the pleasure of an introduction to the present Governor-general, his Excellency General Hansen, and of receiving much kindness and information from him, and other official gentlemen under him in the island. The chief town or capital is Christianstadt. It is so named in honour of Christian IV., King of Denmark, and it is situated on the north coast, about the lower extremity of the island, called Bas-end. It is a substantial, regularly-built town, of about ten thousand inhabitants, containing a large Government house, several excellent churches, and possessing an excellent harbour which is protected by a fortress—the only objection to the harbour being that it is a port of difficult departure, when the wind is in particular directions. Such is Christianstadt, St Croix *now*. The general statement of the residents in the island

was, that it had fallen off in population and importance since the late emancipation by Denmark of the slaves in her colonial possessions.

At the other extremity of the island (named West End) stands the town of Frederickstadt, built more in the style of modern sea-coast towns with us—covering fully more ground, and scarcely, if in any respect, inferior to its companion town of Christianstadt; although the latter enjoys the advantage of being the seat of the colonial government.

In the British islands of Barbadoes, Antigua, St Christopher's, Montserrat, &c., of late years a blight has attacked the cocoa-nut trees, and has destroyed, or is destroying, nearly the whole of them; to the injury, not only of the trees themselves, but of Mr H. N. Coleridge's fine poetical description of them, wherein they are represented as—

“Palms which never die, but stand  
Immortal sea-marks on the strand.”

The first part to suffer and to decay is the umbrella-like canopy of leaves; and, this graceful finish to the tapering stem being away, the stalk is not only deprived of beauty, but becomes an object of deformity. This has been the cause of considerable pecuniary loss to the proprietors in some of these islands; and it has also been productive of considerable loss of beauty to many of the scenes the islands exhibit. For myself, I confess I had but little idea of the

“Palm-tree waving high,”

until I saw it in its native region,\* and relieved against the deep blue of the tropic sky. My impression, when in Antigua, was, that the few trees that had survived the effects of the blight were beginning to recover therefrom, and were, in some cases, putting forth new leaves. But at the same time I could not fail to acquiesce in the opinion expressed by an experienced friend, Mr Martin of Highpoint, &c., Antigua, that the true course was to supply the deficiencies produced by the blight by planting new trees. It was, however, to be regretted, that no effort to do this was made in any place or plantation that came under my observation in the English islands; and I was therefore the more ready to notice the fact, that not only the taller generation of palm-trees now to be seen in Santa Cruz (the number of which was certainly not short of forty or fifty thousand) were in full health and vigour, but that numerous young trees had been planted to supply the place of the older denizens, when these latter had met the fate which awaits the trunks of trees as well as the trunks of men. How this desirable end—the obtaining a succession of cocoa-nut trees—is attained, I could not authentically ascertain, further than being informed that the Danish Government had made it

\* I am not ignorant of the fact, that the cocoa-nut tree (the *cocos* of botany) is supposed to be indigenous to the East Indies, and thence brought to America and the West Indian Islands. But it has now been so long domiciled in the islands of the West Indian Archipelago, that I think it may fairly be considered as entitled to the name and privileges of a native.

for a long time imperative, that certain quantities of such trees, for shade and refreshment, should be planted and kept up along all the roads throughout the island.

Although no part of Santa Cruz rises to a great elevation, (Prosperity Hill being the highest land in the island, and that being only about eleven hundred feet above the level of the sea,) yet there are many scenes of exceedingly picturesque beauty to be found in the island, particularly in the northern portions of it, which amply merit a visit, and well repay it. But, at the same time, it is the verdant, fertile character of the island as a whole, and the superiority and comfort of the planters' houses and their econcomitants, that form the characteristics of this island. Such or suchlike properties as those called respectively Canevalley, Paradise, Adventure, Fountain, and Castle estates, and many others that might be named, are seldom to be seen in any other of the West Indian Islands, and their condition bespeaks a high degree either of past or present prosperity on the part of the proprietors. That the past prosperity of Santa Cruz has been very great, is well known to all acquainted with this lovely island. Whether such prosperity is to attend the colony for the future, is a question which makes the recent and all-important change in the condition of the negro population—a change from slavery to freedom—one of much interest and importance. Denmark had preceded England in her abolition of the slave trade;

but she allowed the "Island Queen" to take the precedence of her in the abolition of slavery itself within her own territorial dominions—and that by no less than sixteen years. She has, however, now followed the noble example. By the very brief statute, a copy and a translation of which will be found in Appendix A, which is dated 3d July 1848, all the "unfree," or slaves, in the Danish West Indian Islands were from that date emancipated from their previous state of serfdom. It was the knowledge of this fact that first induced in me the desire to visit the Danish islands of St Thomas and Santa Cruz, as I was desirous of seeing a population on whom so important a change had so very recently passed, and of judging on the spot for myself of the effects likely to accrue from the transition, and from the manner in which it had been brought about. I say the manner in which it had been accomplished; for while, in the absence of bloodshed attending the insurrection of the slaves which took place in Santa Cruz, in July 1848, there is much to be thankful for, it is certainly to be regretted that the Danish slaves received as the fruits of insurrection, and not as a free and generous boon from the Home Government, the inestimable blessing of freedom. Indeed—and after hearing a detail of the whole attendant circumstances, and witnessing the evidences of the truth which surround one on every side when visiting the island of Santa Cruz—it is impossible to deny that, although the insurrection preceded and accelerated it, the giving of freedom to her slaves was an

act of grace, a free gift, previously resolved upon on the part of the Danish government, and of its official representative, his Excellency General Von Sholton, then Governor-general of the Danish West India possessions. There can be no doubt but that the insurrection might have been put down by the strong arm of power, if the Government and Governor had so willed ; and I could not refuse my assent to the observation which fell from more than one of the leading men of the island, that it is almost to be regretted that it was not so put down, (the gift of freedom to follow, as a gift, immediately on its suppression,) even although the doing so might have been attended with some bloodshed. It is dangerous, always dangerous, to give a people—particularly an ignorant people—an idea of their power, even though the idea be a false one : and that the negro population of Santa Cruz have such an erroneous idea—that they ignorantly suppose that the Danish Government gave them their freedom simply because they could not keep it from them—is, I fear, the conclusion that must be drawn by every one who hears these poor people talk grandiloquently of “ the war,” and the “ scenes of the war ;” the “ war ” being the name they themselves give to that short and bloodless *emeute* which, commencing on or about Saturday the 1st of July 1848, by a ringing of bells and blowing of conch shells, (the negroes’ favourite horn of warning, and a most effective, far-sounding one,) ended, as has been already stated, on Monday the 3d of July 1848, in



the granting of entire emancipation. Even at the outset of the disturbance, and although there were then but few military in the island, there was only one opinion as to the ability of those few, aided by very efficient militia and yeomanry corps, kept up by the European population, to crush the so-called "rebellion," had the Governor chosen to make use of such materials for that purpose. But it is more than suspected, nay, it is openly affirmed and generally believed, that his Excellency favoured the insurrection; and it is by many even supposed that, in so doing, he was acting not only in accordance with his own personal views and feelings on the question of slavery, but in accordance with instructions received from the Government at Copenhagen.

After the insurrection had broken out, and to guard against any extensive course of license and plunder being had recourse to, the Governor of the island applied for, and obtained the aid of several hundreds of Spanish soldiers, from the neighbouring fertile Spanish colony of Porto Rico. But these auxiliaries were not called into action in any way, so far as I could learn; although there is not a doubt but that, so reinforced, the Danish troops and island militia might easily have kept or replaced matters in their old position. Apropos of the Danish troops, I was exceedingly pleased with the clean soldierly appearance of those I saw in this island, and also in the neighbouring island of St Thomas; and, during my residence in either place, I did not see that which is

unfortunately so often to be seen with us—viz. a drunk soldier.

Although the Danish Government have thus liberated the slaves in their colonial possessions, they have not yet, at least had not when I visited the island in April 1849, given any compensation to the proprietors who held these slaves, and cultivated their estates by means of their labour. The claim for compensation had however been mooted, and confident expectations were held out by well-informed parties, that a claim so just would certainly be attended to. And now when Republican France has set her the example, in allowing compensation to the planters of Martinique and Guadaloupe, and now that she no longer requires to waste her blood and treasure in the Sleswick-Holstein war, it is to be hoped that Denmark will show herself worthy to be placed alongside of England, by doing all she can to compensate her colonists for at all events a part of the loss they must have sustained by the measure in question. It is only to be hoped that the compensation to be given will be something more than nominal; and that, while she follows France in the principle, she will not follow her example as to the amount to be given. For surely, at this hour of the day, and after the experience afforded by the British West India colonies, it is idle to say that the being deprived of the services of their slaves *as slaves*, and compelled to cultivate their lands with them only *as freemen*, in the face of competition by the Spanish colonies of Port Rico and Cuba, is not a

source of loss to the planters. "That free labour is as cheap to the planter as slave labour," was one of the fallacies which prevailed with many at the time the emancipation of the slaves in the British possessions (in itself a measure most desirable, but most unwisely precipitated) was carried by clamour in this country. Even then, there were found many who lifted up a warning voice, and told us to take care lest the effect of too sudden a change upon the condition of a race whom centuries had nearly brutalised, might not eventually prove injurious, and retard the civilisation of the very parties for whose benefit it was designed. Many able practical men said that, with Porto-Rico, Cuba, and Brazil to compete with, the planter who worked his estates by means of free labourers could not successfully carry on his operations, without reducing his workmen's wages to such a minimum as would leave them little for clothes, and nothing for education—unless in some way or other he got a very high price for the article he manufactured. Yet the argument *ad captandum* prevailed; and it formed at least part of the causes which led to the emancipation of the whole of the slaves of England in 1834, that it was believed that slave labour was to the full as expensive as was labour by means of freemen, even in the then state of the West Indian Islands. But this fallacy is, I presume, pretty well exploded—at all events, I have not lately heard it; and stubborn must be the disciple to it whom the effects of the Sugar Duties Bill of 1846 upon the prosperity of the

British sugar-growing colonies, has not convinced of his mistake. That emancipation, by any government, of slaves previously held as property by its subjects, in virtue of laws which legalised or recognised the existence of what has been called "man's property in man," must be productive of loss to the holders of such property, is therefore a proposition of easy demonstration here, were it not that its discussion would be foreign to the purposes of the work, or at least to the present portion of it. The subject has naturally presented itself in connexion with the recent slave insurrection in the island of Santa Cruz, and the emancipation by the Danish Government which followed upon it; and these few remarks have been made upon it in passing, because it were undue concealment to hide the fact that, anxious as I was to see the matter in the most favourable light, I found that the greater number of the most intelligent of the planters and proprietors in Santa Cruz—the gentlemen who had the largest stake in the matter, and who were best acquainted with all the details—entertained the gloomiest apprehensions on the subject, fearing that the emancipation was an end of the island's prosperity, and that it had been gone about too suddenly, and with too little regard to the unprepared state of the society for the reception of the boon, to render it likely that it would be productive of anything save a lessening of their comforts even to the negro population themselves, at least for a long time to come. Such certainly were the views I heard most frequently

expressed at the tables of the planters, and even at the table of the Governor-general, during my visit to the island; and it is therefore only just that I should say so. There were, however, others who took a more cheering and encouraging view of the matter, and of the future prospects of this charming island; and most sincerely do I hope that the latter may prove to be sound, and the former false prophets; and that, as regards the opinion of "antieipators of evil," it may be the case in this, as in other instancees, that the "fear" and not the wish has been father to the thought.

Nor should I omit here to mention the fact, that both parties, the dismalists as well as the children of hope, unite in giving the present Governor-general (Hansen) credit, not only for the best intentions, but for the adoption of the wisest measures for the general prosperity of the island; and particularly for the measures he adopted to lessen the rudeness of the transition, and any injurious effects likely to result therefrom. In particular, General Hansen, immediately after entering on his duties as Governor-general, passed an act "to regulate the relations between the proprietors of landed estates and the rural population of free labourers," which has been found to work very beneficially. This act is known in Santa Cruz as "The Labour Act;" and, as I have heard it much commended by many planters, even in the British colonies, as containing numerous provisions of great wisdom, which might be advantageously followed by

ourselves, I have deemed it advisable to give (for those who may wish to peruse it) a translation of it in the Appendix B.

Leaving Santa Cruz and my kind friends there with very great regret, and attended by my countryman, Mr Lang, to the boat, I sailed again at six A.M. in the West End packet for St Thomas; but, after a very rough handling on the part of Neptune, (who had hitherto proved so propitious and quiescent, that I had almost resolved to write a book to vindicate him from the aspersion of faithless, uncertain, and treacherous—

“*Varium et mutabile semper*”—

with which he is so often assailed by poets and others,) I reached the Bay of St Thomas about four o’clock A.M. of next morning; lying in my crib on board the packet till seven A.M. I landed again at St Thomas, and employed the additional days of my stay in that island to a further exploration of it, and to the daily enjoyment of the superb view from the crest of the hill which overhangs the town, until the arrival of the steam-ship Tay, in which I was to proceed, and did, after a few days, proceed onward in my journeyings.

## CHAPTER VI.

—“ Not content  
With every food of life to nourish man,  
Thou mak'st all nature beauty to his eye  
And music to his ear.”—MILTON.

“ The wild Maroons, impregnable and free,  
Among the mountain-holds of liberty,  
Sudden as lightning darted on their foe—  
Seen like the flash, remembered like the blow.”

LEAVE ST THOMAS—ISLAND OF PORTO RICO—PAST STATISTICS OF POPULATION—SAINT DOMINGO—PAST HISTORY AND PRESENT POSITION—LATE TRANSPOSITION IN FORM OF GOVERNMENT—JAMAICA—CRUELTY OF SPANIARDS TO ABORIGINES—RETRIBUTIVE JUSTICE—GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF JAMAICA SCENERY—VISIT TO PORT ROYAL MOUNTAINS—THEIR SCENERY—FIRE-FLIES—COFFEE-PLANTATION AND COFFEE-PLANT—ST IAGO DE LA VEGA—STATUE TO RODNEY—BOG WALK—JAMAICA AS A PLACE OF SANITARY RESORT—CREOLE BEAUTY—PORT ROYAL.

LEAVING St Thomas late in the evening, a sail of some twelve hours brought us to the fortified town of Saint Juan's, forming the capital of

### PORTO RICO,

One of the Spanish West Indian possessions, situated between latitude  $17^{\circ} 55'$  and  $18^{\circ} 30'$  north, and lon-

gitude  $65^{\circ} 40'$  and  $67^{\circ} 20'$  west; about one hundred and twenty miles long and sixty broad, and containing a population of three hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, of whom only about forty-two thousand are slaves, the rest of the population being composed of about one hundred and eighty-nine thousand whites, one hundred thousand mulattoes, and twenty-five thousand free blacks. Indeed, it is this circumstance—the smallness of its slave, and indeed of its negro population, as compared with the number of whites and coloured people—that may be said to form the chief characteristic of the colony of Porto Rico: the circumstance itself being accounted for by the fact that, for centuries, the island formed a penal settlement of the mother country. Not having done more than land at Porto Rico, I cannot add my personal testimony to that of the many travellers who have attested the fact, that Porto Rico, though not so romantic as some of the other larger islands, such as St Domingo or Jamaica, (being much flatter), is an island of great, nay, of excessive fertility—diversified with woods, valleys, and plains, watered by numerous rivers and springs, and abundantly well stocked with cattle of every kind and description common to these islands. Indeed, the value and extent of her exports in sugar, molasses, coffee, corn, and even rice, as well as the large revenue she yields to Spain, sufficiently prove the extreme fertility of this island; and that the fields of Porto Rico, cultivated as they certainly are chiefly by white men, and under a tropical



sun of as overpowering heat as is to be found in any other part of the West Indies—Guiana alone excepted—are as well cultivated as any other of the tropical possessions. The capital, St Juan de Porto Rico, with its fine bay and extensive fortifications, looks exceedingly well from the sea; but, like most Spanish towns, St Juan's looks best at a distance. On closer inspection, it wants the element of cleanliness, so valued in an Englishman's estimate of superiority or of comfort.

Leaving St Juan de Porto Rico after a short stay, and coasting along the shore of the island, the steamer next proceeds by a route of about sixty or seventy miles to the large island of

#### ST DOMINGO, HISPANIOLA, OR HAYTI,

By nature the richest, as well as the largest, of all the islands in the West Indian Archipelago. The island of Hayti is four hundred miles in length by about seventy-five miles in breadth. It was first discovered by Columbus in 1492, and then named Hispaniola, under which name it was retained by Spain for one hundred and twenty years; and, during her despotic rule for that period, its population was reduced from nearly a million, to only sixty thousand inhabitants. Thereafter it was jointly occupied by France and Spain till 1795, when the whole of it fell into the hands of the French, who retained it until 1804, when it passed from their hands, and was proclaimed an independent empire under its first emperor, Dessalines, a black chief, who “assumed the imperial

purple," under the imposing title of Emperor of Hayti—that being the ancient if not the original name of the island. From 1804 downwards, the history of this unfortunate island has been little or nothing else than the history of rapine—one black rising up to contest the sovereignty with another, and filling the island with scenes of confusion and misery, which go far to prove the theory of those who maintain that the negro race is by natural incapacity unfitted for self-government. Indeed, there is scarcely a page of the history of St Domingo, from the date of its occupation by Spain (which is now, by a retributive justice, doing in her own person a kind of penance for her gross cruelty to the inhabitants of the West Indian Islands) that can be perused with pleasure by the friend of humanity; unless, perchance, it be that page which tells of the heroic struggles for the liberty of himself and fellows, on the part of the African slave, and subsequent chief, Toussaint, who displayed a fortitude in adversity and a moderation in prosperity, which would have graced a person of infinitely higher opportunities and attainments; and whose perfidious seizure and destruction, (in the dungeon in which he was confined in France,) by the French, reflects very little credit on *la grande nation*. Lately, in this present year 1849, St Domingo has been the theatre of a farce which promises to end in a renewal of some of the tragie scenes of which her poor inhabitants have been so often the victims. After having been for some time a republic, under

the government of a President, and when it would almost seem as if the tendency of matters in Europe was—right or wrong, fault or no fault—to overturn thrones, empires, kingdoms, and monarchies, and transform them all into “republics,”—as if a change of name were in itself a correction of abuses—the ambition of President Soulouque has induced him to try the adoption of a different course, and by a little manœuvring he has managed to get himself elected to a throne under the title of “Emperor,” and by some such imposing name as that of Soulouque Faustin II., Emperor of Hayti. But, of course, the Haytian public have quite a right to please themselves; and the whole matter would only be ridiculous, and as such might have almost escaped notice, were it not for the contrast it bears to the events lately transacted in Europe; or were it not for the fear that M. Soulouque’s transposition from president to emperor may just be the forerunner of a renewal of those contests, in this island of independent blacks, of which there has for some years been so much, and so much to deplore. It is certainly to be regretted that an island so fertile, so romantic, and so capable of supporting a large population in comfort and luxury, should be under such governance, and have so many appearances of a retrograde course in civilisation. But it is easier to deplore the fact than to point out a remedy; for, of course, (in these times of enlightenment, when it becomes nations to consider the question of *right*, instead of confining themselves

exclusively to considering questions of *might*, before engaging in any attempt,) improvement or alteration, to be effected by force of arms, is not to be thought of.

The part of the island of St Domingo at which, for the present, the English steamer touches, is Jacmel, a somewhat miserable village, lying in a very pretty bay on the south side of the island. Having there exchanged her mails, the steamer proceeds onwards in her course to the north, and next touches at the town of Kingston, in the island of

#### JAMAICA,

Well known as the largest of the British islands in the West Indies, situated between  $17^{\circ}$  and  $19^{\circ}$  of north latitude, and  $76^{\circ}$  and  $79^{\circ}$  of west longitude. Jamaica is about one hundred and seventy miles long by about sixty broad. This noble island was discovered by Columbus, during the course of his second voyage of discovery, on the 3d of May 1494. He named it Santiago—its present name, Jamaica, being simply a corruption of its previously existing Indian one of Xaymaca, or “the land of springs”—a name which at once points out one of the characteristics of this island, and emphatically illustrates the value the inhabitants of the tropics assign to a plentiful supply of spring-water.

Jamaica has been so long and so well known in this country, and also in America, and it is now, and has for many years been, so often visited, and so frequently described, that it were out of place were I to

do more than glance at its history, and describe, in a general way, the scenes I visited when in it, and the impressions and effects they produced upon my mind.

The early history of Santiago or Jamaica, from the date of its discovery by Columbus in 1494, and during its occupation by the Spaniards, until the year 1655, when it was taken possession of by British forces during the Protectorate and iron rule of Oliver Cromwell, that longest-to-be-understood of all the rulers of England, is well known; and it is as well known that it consists almost entirely of a series of narratives of cruelty and oppression, perpetrated on the persons of the unfortunate aborigines, which cast a deep shade over the memory of the great discoverer of the New World, and make one read, with something like a feeling of satisfaction, the details of civil strife and foreign aggression which have ravaged the fertile fields of Spain in later years, and which seem almost as if they were acts of retributive justice, for the impious deceptions and atrocious cruelties perpetrated by the Spaniards on the gentle aborigines of the island of Jamaica. Seven hundred thousand Indians disappeared from the face of this single island, within the first twelve or thirteen years from the date of its first discovery! Caves are still to be found (or at least found at the time of the publication of Edwards' book) in the mountains, in which the ground is covered over with the bones of the unfortunate Indians, whom the rapacity of the so-called

Christians had driven into such retreats, and who preferred the dreadful fate of perishing with hunger, to that of expiring by a lingering death under the heavy servitude and murderous cruelties of the white men. The simple fact that an island,—described by the discoverers themselves as being, at the date of discovery, filled to overflowing with a simple inoffensive people, in the possession of all the necessaries of life, and living in so much greater luxury than the natives of some of the other islands, that, when Columbus visited them, his ship was surrounded by “canoes of large size, handsomely painted both at the bow and stern, each of them made from the trunk of a single tree,”\*—was, by a few years of Spanish domination, not only enslaved, but almost entirely depopulated, speaks volumes. Facts such as these require no comment: they speak for themselves, and fully prepare the mind for doing more than concurring in the gentle reprobation of the eloquent Irving, when he says, with reference to Columbus having sent some hundreds of the aborigines to Spain, to swell his triumph, and with the suggestion that they might be sold as slaves—“It is painful to find the brilliant renown of Columbus sullied by so foul a ‘stain, and the glory of his enterprise degraded by such flagrant violations of humanity.”

I have already said that the latter pages of Spanish

\* I find it stated, on the authority of Mr Irving, that one of these canoes, measured by Columbus himself, was of the almost incredible length of ninety-six feet.

history, as regards the transactions on her own soil, reveal something like the actings of a principle of retributive justice. The same observation may be made regarding the evanescent character of her colonial greatness. The discoverer and conqueror of South America, and the possessor of sundry islands to the north, and of nearly all that was valuable in the West Indian Archipelago,—the immense colonial empire of Spain has been gradually diminished into a mere fragment of its former self.

As above stated, Jamaica passed out of the hands of Spain into the hands of Great Britain, during the Protectorate of Cromwell, in 1655, and, with the exception of a few Spanish names, and, in particular, of the euphonious name of the former capital, (now the second town in the island, and still the residence of the British governor,) the town of Saint Iago de la Vega, (Spanish Town,) there is nothing to remind the visitor that the island was ever one of Spain's Transatlantic possessions.

The very first sight of Jamaica is beautiful and inspiring. The luxuriance of the tropical vegetation, combined with the grandeur of the mountain ranges of the Port Royal and Blue Mountains, (which are fully eight thousand feet at their highest elevation,) constitute and create views of rich and rare beauty. The coast is indented with numerous very beautiful, and, I believe, very safe bays; and although the land near the coast is flat and level, it soon begins to rise as you journey inwards, until it ascends to the height

of the mountains already referred to, which traverse the island from east to west almost for its entire length. The mountains of Port Royal and the Blue Mountains, again, are intersected in every direction by deep fissures, glens, and "gullies," formed by the convulsions of nature during some one or other of the many earthquakes from which Jamaica has suffered, or by the washings of the impetuous torrents (which sweep down the mountain-sides, carrying everything before them) during the frequent hurricanes by which the island has been devastated. And these glens, fissures, and ravines, again, being clothed to their bottom, and crowned to their crests, by a great variety of tropical trees, many of them of gigantic size, and most of them of exceeding beauty, the result is, that at almost every turn the traveller is delighted with scenes of the rarest formation, as well as of the greatest beauty and grandeur. It has been said by some one, that Jamaica, as well as Martinique, has scenes "surpassing fable;" and if by this it is meant that it were difficult, even for the imagination of greatest power, to preconceive the extraordinary fantastic shapes and contortions of mountain and of glen, into which nature occasionally throws herself in this romantic island, nothing can be more just. To me it appeared (and the image, though a plain one, is the only one I can at present remember which gives my ideas with any sort of accuracy) as if the whole island had at one time been in a boiling state, then suddenly cooled down, when at its point



of highest ebullition, and after that split in every possible direction, and the fissures, so formed, clothed with noblest flowers and foliage to their highest heights and innermost recesses.

It is among the Port Royal Mountains that the coffee plantations of Jamaica are chiefly to be seen; and it was on a visit to one of these that I first saw the remarkable scenery of which I have attempted the above very general description. An account of the visit will aid in giving the reader a more determinate idea of the scenery in question.

The ascent from Kingston up to a place called the "Botanic Garden," for a distance of nine miles, is by a tolerably good carriage road, and presents no features requiring special mention, although for some time ere you reach Botanic Garden, the scenery assumes a very Alpine character, and the mountains of Port Royal, which occupy the foreground of the picture, are very sublime. From Botanic Garden, to what I may call, in railway phrasology, the "summit level," is by a bridle-path, up a very precipitous winding ascent, inaccessible to carriages, and only to be travelled on horses or mules. From various points of elevation, different superb mountain-views present themselves; and from the mountain-top the scene which opens upon you is certainly one of the most magnificent that can well be conceived. It stretches away in every direction, behind and before, on either side of the Blue Mountain range, and seaward as far as the eye can reach. Behind is the vale or

glen whence you have toiled to an elevation of some four thousand feet, with the town and valley of Kingston beyond it, and the glorious sea stretching away in the far distance, as—

“Without a mark, without a bound,  
It runneth the earth’s wide regions round.”

In front of you is a narrow glen, at the bottom of which a stream, called, I believe, the Yallows river, may be traced like a silver thread pursuing its tortuous course through the rock-obstructed, thickly-wooded vale. Beyond this glen, and overlooking it, the eye rests on another ridge of the same range of hills, on which ridge the mansion-house of Pleasant Hill estate stands conspicuous, perched, as it were, in mid air, and seemingly (for from the place the observer is presumed to stand, the road is not visible) only to be reached by the aid of a pair of wings. While still onwards, and beyond all that I have attempted to describe, is seen the gigantic summit of John Crow Hill, towering over everything in that particular direction. Again, when the attention of the observer is turned to either side, he is even still more entranced with the occasional views he will get, at different parts of the road, of the cloud-capped peak of the Blue Mountain range on the one side of him, or of the almost equally magnificent summit called St Catherine’s Peak on the other.

The trees that the European visitor will meet with in such a journey as this, will greatly interest him.

In describing a ride in another part of the island, I shall have occasion to notice the extreme size and graceful beauty of the bamboos; but, in the course of my excursions among the mountain scenery of Jamaica, I did not observe any tree that appeared to me more remarkable than the silk cotton-tree, (*Bombax*,) of which I had already seen some extraordinary specimens in Antigua, and particularly in the ascent to Fig-Tree hill in that island. Many of these trees are of great size, being not less than fifteen feet in diameter; and, as they grow in the most fantastic shapes and directions, without any regard to symmetry or regularity, throwing their larger branches out at right angles with the trunk, and the smaller branches almost at right angles with their larger ones, the whole being nearly bare of leaves and covered over with a parasitic plant, (resembling the pine-apple plant somewhat in shape,) the result is an appearance which entitles it to be considered as a monster amongst forest trees. In its massive sturdy proportions, and naked appearance, the silk cotton-tree called up the poet's description so often applied to the British oak, as it stands, or withstands, the blasts of winter in our northern clime:—

“*Pondere fixa suo est, nudosque per æra ramos  
Attollens, trunco non frondibus efficit umbram.*”

The name of “silk cotton-tree” is derived from its producing a pod filled with a silky white substance, which is of a very short fibre; and of which I could

not ascertain that any use was made in any of the islands. Next to this remarkable production of nature, the tamarind-tree, the largest specimens of which, however, are to be found in the valleys, attracted most of my attention. Indeed, the West Indian tamarind-tree appeared to my eye one of the most beautiful trees I had ever seen. It does not grow to a great height, being seldom seen above forty feet high; but it sends off numerous branches from the trunk to a considerable distance, and with great regularity—has a small leaf of a lightish green colour—has a very pretty white or yellowish flower, with red veins, which gradually forms into the pod, (containing the tamarind enveloped in a pulpy matter); and whether in leaf, flower, or fruit, the West India tamarind-tree is one of the most graceful trees to be seen in any part of the world. The beautiful cedar-tree, red and white, is also to be seen in great abundance in Jamaica; and in many places in the interior may be likewise found the mahogany, the ebony, the boxwood, the rosewood, and many other trees, valuable on account of their uses or of their timber.

When travelling among the mountains of Jamaica, and particularly when spending the afternoon and evening at the mansion-house attached to a coffee plantation among the Port Royal mountains, (where, seemingly, far away from the heat and bustle of the plains and the busier haunts of man, and perched more than half way up the mountain-side, at an elevation of nearly five thousand feet above the level of the

ocean, I enjoyed the unwonted luxury of a fireplace with a fire in it, and the additional luxuries of cold spring water, *un-iced*, and a sleep under a blanket) I was surprised to find myself, when walking in the evening, surrounded by a host of fire-flies. I had of course seen these insects in the plains, but I had somewhere read that they were not to be found in the mountain ranges; and I was certainly not prepared to find them more numerous at the elevation described than I had ever before known them. In the language of the poet—

“ Every hedge and copse was bright  
With the quick fire-fly’s playful light ;  
Like thousands of the sparkling gems  
Which blaze in Eastern diadems.”

It is said that these insects are occasionally enclosed in glass cases, and used as candles; and although I should think a million of them but a poor substitute for a gas, or even a candle lamp, I do not doubt the assertion. Nor do I doubt the truth of the statement made by Mr Turnbull in his book on the island of Cuba, that “ the late eccentric Mr Joseph of Trinidad, (Cuba,) assured him that he had written *several volumes* by this sort of light.” But whatever they may be as aids in literary composition, the fire-fly is a very beautiful object “ in the starry light of a summer night,” on the hill-sides of Jamaica, flitting about from flower to flower, and from shrub to shrub, with their lamps burning with a pale clear flame.

It was in this part of the island of Jamaica that I

first saw a coffee plantation. Indeed, it was to visit and inspect such plantations that I directed my steps to the Port Royal mountains. It is well known that the coffee plant has, for a long time, been extensively cultivated in this island. Indeed, the whole of the mountainous districts of Jamaica—and this includes a very great extent of land—is admirably adapted for this culture; and, particularly since the declaration of Haytian independence, coffee has been grown in Jamaica to a very large extent. It is, however, too much to be feared, that the days of its profitable culture in Jamaica are, for the present at least, at an end. On all hands was I assured, that nothing could now be made by growing coffee in the Island of Springs; that few or no new plantations had been formed of late years, and that the old ones were gradually going out of cultivation. Were it for nothing else than the beauty of the culture, this is deeply to be regretted. Anything in the way of cultivation more beautiful, or more fragrant, than a coffee plantation, I had not conceived; and oft did I say to myself, that if ever I became, from health or otherwise, a cultivator of the soil within the tropics, I would cultivate the coffee plant, even though I did so irrespective altogether of the profit that might be derived from so doing. Much has been written, and not without justice, of the rich fragrance of an orange grove; and at home we oftentimes hear of the sweet odours of a bean-field. I too have often enjoyed, in the Carse of Stirling and elsewhere in Scotland, the balmy breezes

as they swept over the latter, particularly when the sun had burst out, with unusual strength, after a shower of rain. I have likewise, in Martinique, Santa Cruz, Jamaica, and Cuba, inhaled the gales wafted from the orangeries; but not for a moment would I compare either with the exquisite aromatic odours from a coffee plantation in full blow, when the hill-side—quite covered over with regular rows of the tree-like shrub, with their millions of jessamine-like flowers—showers down upon you, as you ride up between the plants, a perfume of the most delicately delicious description. 'Tis worth going to the West Indies to see the sight and inhale the perfume.

The coffee plant is not a native of the West Indies, and the history of its introduction into these islands is worth recording. The tree or plant was first brought by the Dutch from Mocha into Batavia, and the bean or fruit was first sold in Europe at the fair of St Germain in 1672. Thereafter, it was introduced into France by Louis XIV. as an exotic; and this introduction of the tree into Europe led to its being transferred in 1720 into the French island of Martinique. From Martinique the French transplanted some of the shrubs to St Domingo, and thence the coffee plant spread to Jamaica and the other West Indian Islands. It grows best on the hill-sides, at a considerable elevation; and when grown in the plains (as in Porto Rico, Demerara, &c.) it requires to have such loftier trees and shrubs as the orange or the plantain, &c., planted between the rows of coffee-trees or bushes, to shelter

them from the ardour of the meridian sun. On the mountain-side the coffee plant is longer of coming to maturity, by reason of the greater coolness; and for the same reason it continues to bear fruit for a longer term of years. In the plains it sooner attains maturity, and is sooner exhausted by bearing; and this fact explains and accounts for the contrariety of statements regarding the date at which the coffee plant arrives at maturity, or the length of its fruit-bearing season. Both vary according to the climate in which the plant is grown; or, what is the same thing, according to the elevation at which it is grown. And thus the inquirer may be on one occasion truthfully told that the coffee plant arrives at perfection in four or five years, and ceases to bear at forty or fifty years of age; and on another, with equal truth, that it takes eight or ten years to arrive at maturity, but lasts till seventy or eighty years of age.

In a "caffetal" or coffee plantation, the plants (which are grown from suckers or slips) are planted in regular rows—each plant being allowed a space of from six to ten feet square to develop itself. If left to itself the plant or bush would grow to a height of seven or eight feet, or occasionally higher, but it is kept down by pruning, to about four feet high. The leaves are of the dark-green hue, and also of the form of the leaves of the common laurel, but smaller; and the flowers are white, in every respect like those of the jessamine, save only that those of the coffee plant are somewhat larger. The berries are



like small cherries, and, like cherries, they progress in ripeness, from green to black or purple. The berries are also sweet and pulpy, and each of them contains two seeds—which seeds constitute what is with us called coffee beans. The processes of preparing coffee for the market are, pruning, picking, pulping, drying, and separating, which may be very shortly described as follows:—Pruning consists in tending the plants, and seeing that they do not waste their strength in growing wood instead of fruit. Picking is pulling the berries, carefully selecting only those that are ripe, and leaving the immature to be ripened by the sun; and it is in this part of the process that the want of labourers in some of our British West Indian colonies (or rather the difficulty of getting the labourers to work) is chiefly felt. On the coffee plant the blossom, the unripe, and the ripe fruit may occasionally be seen all at once; and hence it is that, in “picking” properly, the plant requires to be visited frequently, for the purpose, in the course of a season. In the Spanish island of Porto Rico, where labour is plentiful, and where there are means of compelling it, this is easily accomplished. The “pickers” visit the plant frequently; and the result is shown in the equal condition of the berries removed on each occasion. But in Jamaica, where labour is scarce, and where there are no means of inducing the labourers to work even at this light species of task, save by the temptation of excessive wages, (and even that does not always succeed,) the proprietor or manager of the caffee is glad to get his coffee

plants picked when and in what manner he can procure labourers to do it. The consequences may be anticipated. Pulping is performed by a "pulping mill," an engine of very ingenious construction, which deprives the seeds of the pulp by which they are surrounded, and also of the outer skin of the berry. The two seeds found in each berry are thus separated, and each of them is then found to be covered with a thin paper-like skin, which is taken off by another mill, adapted for the purpose. To be dried, the seeds are exposed to the sun on a "barbecue" or flat place, on the hill-top or hill-side, made with lime, plaster of Paris, and some other materials, (like a very dry malting floor) where the coffee-seeds are allowed to remain some time, (great care being taken to preserve them from wet) and after this the coffee-beans are removed from the barbecue, and the broken and inferior seeds separated from the rest—which rest are then ready to be put into bags, and conveyed by donkeys, mules, and horses across the mountains of Port Royal to the town of Kingston, for sale or for shipment.

Such is a very general description of coffee-growing, picking, and preparing, as practised in the island of Jamaica. In some plantations the smaller seeds, and also the bruised or broken ones, are separated from the better kind by a mill for the purpose; but more generally this is done by hand—this part of the process, as is also the picking, being conducted by women and children. In some coffee plantations there

are more numerous appliances for accomplishing the different processes speedily and effectually than are to be found in others. But, in general, they are all as above described; and, as before stated, it is a very pretty cultivation, and a very cleanly process of preparation. Sorry, therefore, was I to learn on the spot that the competition of slave-grown coffee in the home market of Great Britain was likely to prove so great as to drive the Jamaica coffee-planters out of the trade. This, however, is but one of the many injurious effects which have arisen from the Ministry of the day having included the West Indian colonies within the application of their category of free trade, (as regards their exports,) unmindful or regardless of the fact that, by previous legislation, the inhabitants of these colonies had been deprived of the power to cultivate their estates by means of slaves—their competitors in the populous and rich colonial possessions of Spain and Portugal having it still in their power so to do; forgetful, in short, of the circumstances which render the case of the British West Indian planter an exceptional one.

Returning to Kingston from a visit to the coffee plantations among the Port-Royal mountains, the visitor may vary the scene by taking a somewhat different route than that by which he went. I did so, and returned by a road which led me across the summit at a different point, and by a gorge or cleft, which is so totally unseen until the traveller is just in it, that you are actually rounding the bluff corner or

point ere you can persuade yourself that there can be a means of exit in that direction. The road, or bridle-path in question, pursues its way down the mountains, passing the barracks at Newcastle, which lie a little to the right. This garrison at Newcastle stands very beautifully amongst the mountain scenery, at an elevation little, if anything, short of three thousand feet.

To describe the scenery of this day's ride were almost to repeat what has been already written of the ascent. Though different, it was still the same—sufficiently varied to give renewed delight to the wanderer in search of the picturesque or grand, but not sufficiently different to enable one—or at least one not an adept at describing scenery—to record its peculiar characteristics, in such a way as to make the detail interesting to the general reader. Indeed, the same remark may be made respecting the whole of the mountain scenery of Jamaica. It is unquestionably very grand—ofttimes surprisingly and sublimely so; and many of its scenes of enchantment are enshrined among my most valued recollections of the kind: but they are so marked by the same general features, that they may be often described in nearly the same general way. At all events, and unless the writer had the descriptive talent of a Scott or of a Dickens, it were not easy to give such variety to the written portraiture as to render it interesting to a reader. Very different, however, is it in the inspection. Then there is the perception of an unceasing variety, which prevents the possibility of a *feeling* of sameness.

Something has already been written of the exceeding beauty, or rather grace, of the bamboo-tree. It was in a visit to a scene in the island of Jamaica, of a different description from the mountain scenes above delineated, that my attention was most directed to the peculiar elegance of this tree, with

“ Its feathery tufts, like plumage rare ;  
Its stem so high, so strange, so fair.”

And the view I refer to was one which the traveller in the Island of Springs should on no account leave unvisited. It rejoices in the somewhat strange cognomen of the “ Bog Walk,” but might much more fittingly be denominated the Mountain Glen or the Dark Valley. I visited it when *en route* to visit one of the most, if not the most, beautiful and fertile sugar-plantations in the island of Jamaica, (in compliance with the invitation of its enthusiastic, enterprising, and talented owner, who had been my fellow-voyager from England to Barbadoes, and who, if ever these lines meet his eye, will, I trust, remember the meeting with the same pleasure that I do;) and an account of the whole ride will, I hope, not prove unacceptable to the reader who is desirous of knowing something of a European’s feelings and experiences in the island of Jamaica.

As far as Spanish Town—or (as I would prefer calling it, for the sake of euphony, by its Spanish name) as far as St Iago de la Vega—the route is by railway, a distance of thirteen miles, performed in

about half an hour, travelled by locomotives, passing through a low, flat country, now almost completely grown over with bush, (a species of prickly acacia,) but which, I was assured, was some years ago clear, a large part of it being excellent pasture-land.

Spanish Town, though the seat of the government and the capital, does not afford many objects of interest. The Government-house is a spacious building, and the square in which it stands is neat, and neatly planted. In this square there is a marble statue, executed by Bacon, erected to the memory of Lord Rodney, in acknowledgment of the services rendered by him to his country on the occasion of the signal victory obtained by him and Hood in the West Indies, on the 12th April 1782, over the combined fleets of France and Spain, when they threatened an attack upon Jamaica. This victory was obtained at a time when Great Britain was contending with her revolted American colonies—which opportunity had been seized by France, assisted by Spain, for inflicting a blow against her island rival. I confess that, although the efforts of Jonathan to assert and to maintain his independence, and even his success in doing so, never moved my bile — although, indeed, I regard such struggles and such success, in a strife for liberty, as part of the Anglo-Saxon character—as something that Jonathan has inherited from his father, John Bull—I cannot forgive France the part she has so often played in the unnatural wars between Britain and the States. That without the aid of France,

America could not have succeeded—at least, could not have so soon succeeded—in vindicating her independence, will be acknowledged by every candid student of American history, on whichever side of the Atlantic he has been born or “raised.” But, however desirable it was, or might be, that America should assert her independence, there was much that was unworthy in the motives which led France to throw her weight into the scale; and I cannot help regarding the growth of democratic and republican principles in France, and the destruction of her monarchy and monarchical institutions, with the uncertain tenure on which all things seem at present held in that country, as a kind of retributive justice towards her and her rulers for their ungenerous conduct towards England on the occasion of the wars with the revolted provinces in North America. Be this, however, as it may, it was when England was so engaged, single-handed, and against many enemies, that the naval might of France and Spain was humbled by the victory of Rodney and Hood, thus commemorated in the little square of the little town which rejoices in the euphonious Spanish name of St Iago de la Vega.

The road from Spanish Town to the village of Ewarton passes through the scenery I have already referred to as known by the extraordinary cognomen of the “Bog Walk.” As far as Ewarton the road is good. A few miles after leaving Spanish Town, you enter upon the glen, and, for a distance of about four

or five miles, the eye is delighted by a suecession of romantic scenes of singular formation and exceedingly picturesque beauty. The translucent stream, alongside of which the road winds, has foreed for itself a passage through the opposing barrier of rock, which is oecasionally fully four hundred feet high, as it rises overhead on either side. The luxuriant vegetation of the tropies has elothed the sides of this ravine closely, and to the very summits, with a host of flowering shrubs, and even with giantie forest-trees, which throw their dark shadows down upon the pathway ; while, overhead, are seen glimpses of the deep blue of the tropic sky—of a dark blue, and of a liquid clearness altogether unknown and undreamt of in our less genial but more bracing climate of the north. The whole forms one of the most pleasing seenes it has ever been my good fortune to witness. Further on, in the same ride, are to be seen the giantie clusters of the bamboo, already mentioned, whose feathery foliage, when gently stirred by the breeze, moves and bends with all the grace of the plumes of the ostrich, and is indeed “ beautiful exceedingly.” These bamboo-trees, as they may with propriety be called, are ofttimes seen of fully one hundred feet high, each stem being of six or eight, or even ten inches in diameter, and growing in tufts or clusters of fifty or sixty together, their nodding plumes hanging over your head, and waving in the wind, as the traveller passes on under their grateful shade.

Beyond that part of the journey entitled the Bog



Walk, the scenery of the ride from St Iago de la Vega to the village of Ewarton is pleasing and often fine; and, after leaving Ewarton the scenery-lover progresses into a mountainous district of much grandeur, revealing at almost every turn mountain glades where sunshine and shade repose almost side by side—forming precipices and abysses whose depth the eye is prevented from penetrating, by the deep, close fringe of foliage that covers their sides, and gigantic mountain—peaks rearing their magnificent, cloud-wreathed heads at almost every opening in the forest.

I have, since my return from the voyage of which these volumes contain a brief record, observed a growing tendency in the public mind in this country to regard Jamaica as a place of sanitary resort, and as likely, if not to supersede, at least greatly to interfere with the island of Madeira in that respect: and certainly truth compels me to admit that there are few places to which an invalid from Europe could go with better hope of benefit, than to the salubrious island of Jamaica. The voyage which—particularly when adventured on at the proper season of the year—is oftentimes the most beneficial part of the change, is longer than that to the more frequented island of wine-growing celebrity; and Jamaica being much larger than Madeira, there is greater variety to occupy the attention of the invalid, and to prevent the approach of that ennui which is apt to steal over the exhausted frame. In the plains

and in the towns of the Island of Springs, particularly in Kingston, it is warm, no doubt—hot, and perhaps to most persons very unpleasantly so, being but seldom under 100° of Fahrenheit in the shade. But by going a little way into the country, and up into the mountains, the visitor may literally secure for himself or herself a climate almost of any temperature, from the merely temperate heat of a spring or a summer's morning, to the noonday heat already mentioned. Add to this that the change of scene, (which is always, I should think, of much importance, when the object is to draw off the invalid's attention from himself and his own feelings,) in going direct from Europe to Jamaica, is very great, much greater than it can be by limiting the voyage to the temperate zone. The skies, grains, shrubs, flowers, birds, fish, and above all the trees, are nearly all different and in different forms and combinations. So that the first novel, and no doubt often painful, impressions worn off, there is abundance to attract and occupy the attention, to the exclusion of depressing or other thoughts of self, even during a very extended stay. For the British visitor Jamaica has this further advantage, that the language, the forms and the arrangements of domestic life, and the public ordinances of religious worship, are all nearly the same as those of the mother country. I can, therefore, with great truth and satisfaction, add my humble testimony to that of others who have preceded me, as to the salubrity of Jamaica, and the inducements it holds out

as a place of sanitary resort for the invalid—particularly of the invalid whose lungs are affected, or suspected of being so. But, at the same time, similar remarks may be made of some others of the British West India possessions. So far as my own personal feelings are concerned, I should prefer a temporary location in the smaller island of St Kitt's, with the advantage such residence affords of an occasional two hours' sail to the romantic isle of Nevis. No doubt the island of St Christopher's is not so large as is Jamaica; nor are the mountains of the former so lofty as those of the latter. But, if these circumstances prevent the *variety* of climate, they render it more *equal*; and I have often heard residents in the West Indies complain of injurious effects resulting from a sudden transition from the temperate region of the hill-top, or of the hill-side, to the torrid zone of the plain below. Again, the visitor will not find, in the island of saintly name, so great variety either of society or of scenery as in its larger sister island of spring celebrity. But St Christopher's is surrounded by a number of islands, particularly by those of the British Leeward group, to most of which there is easy and frequent access; and, by a two hours' sail to Nevis, or by a sail of a few hours longer to Montserrat or Antigua, or a day's sail in the steamer to St Thomas, the visitor who makes St Kitt's his headquarters may easily vary the scene almost *ad infinitum*. This, however, is a mere comparison of physical advantages. If the invalid has friends and relations in either place,

he or she will of course be influenced by that consideration; and I would be very far from making an attempt to dissuade from such a course, although it would be displaying base ingratitude, and doing gross injustice to West Indian hospitality, were I not here to add, that there is no part of the world where the person *entirely* a stranger can go, with more certainty of receiving kindness and considerate attention, than to the British colonial possessions in the West Indies. To the native-born subjects of Great Britain this tribute is due. But they will, I trust, forgive me when I add, that I feel almost as if it were doubly due to the colonial-born subjects of our noble country. There seemed to me to be something in the Creole blood that engendered a graceful courtesy and disinterestedness of conduct—some generous peculiarity of mind, derived from the fact that a tropical birthplace had dissolved something of the natural caution of the northern race to which they belonged, and warmed them into a more generous sympathy. The observation applies to my Creole friends of both sexes. As regards the ladies, I may be permitted to add—and I make the addition with heartfelt sincerity—that to a natural kindness (if I may so speak) of manner, there is added an ease, a grace, and a beauty, which at least proves that they have lost none of the charms of the race from which they have sprung, by their parents being transplanted into a warmer clime. I had heard something of the beauty of the Creole ladies ere I visited the West Indies. But I was not a week

there ere I felt surprise that I had not heard much more. And, did not my feeling of what is due to propriety and the duties of private life prevent me from even partially lifting the veil which ought to preserve from publicity whatever the traveller may have seen, through his having been admitted into the circles of domestic life, I could name ladies, married as well as single, in Barbadoes, Antigua, St Kitt's, Sta Cruz, and Jamaica, (particularly I confess in Antigua,) who, in personal charms, as well as accomplishments, would advantageously compare or contrast with any of the fairer part of creation it had ever been my own good fortune to meet. To the fulness and dignity derived from their Norman blood or Anglo-Saxon origin, they add an easy grace and elegance of motion, probably derived in some way from the circumstance of their birthplace being within the tropics. And, albeit their complexion is generally pale, this very circumstance supplies an additional interest; while the soft languor of their dark eyes, with their long eyelashes, give many of these Creole ladies a very peculiar charm. Add to this, that it were difficult to find, in any part of the world, north or south, east or west, any ladies who better discharge their relative duties as daughters, wives, and mothers, than do our fellow-countrywomen in the British islands in the West Indian Archipelago.

From Kingston the traveller may, if he pleases, have an opportunity of visiting Port Royal, where the chief of the Government works are situated. The

sail is by excellent wherries, which perform the voyage with great regularity; and the fare, (up or down,) which is fixed and determined by the Kingston authorities, is one shilling, which, for a distance of six or seven miles, is certainly moderate. This voyage is generally taken by the visitor to Kingston; but it is not one I would advise the invalid to adventure on. In addition to the desire to see the Government works at Port Royal, I had this other inducement, that I anxiously wished to visit the spot where lie the remains of one of the best and earliest friends of my youth—the remains of the excellent and able Dr Archibald Lang, M.D., for several years surgeon of the naval hospital at Port Royal; of whom it is truly said on the beautiful tablet erected to his memory by the naval and military officers then on the West Indian station, in Port Royal church, that—

“He was the good Samaritan, the sick man’s  
Comforter, and the poor man’s friend.”

By one of these contingencies which strike the mind from their infrequency, I had, without any prearrangement, visited Lang’s grave on the anniversary of his death. That day twenty years he had been called by his Maker to give an account of his stewardship, having died in consequence of a wound received in the discharge of his duty as hospital surgeon; and now, twenty years afterwards, I, who had in early life enjoyed much of his favour and well-remembered kindness, stood by his gravestone for the first time.

Good, worthy, excellent Dr Lang ! it required not the anecdotes still told in this far-off place of your labours and repose ; nor the flattering tribute to your worth and memory in the *Naval Reminiscences* of Captain Scott ; nor even the handsome testimonial which your brother officers, of both services, have inscribed on your tombstone within the hospital gates, and again on the marble tablet on the walls of the church ; to inform me of the fact that you were indeed one of the Pilgrims of Mercy, or that—

“Of first-rate talent in the healing art,  
Unwearied zeal, benevolence of heart ;  
For rich, for poor, alike for high and low,  
Your philanthropic heart felt pity's glow.”

But it was delightful to know that your character was so justly estimated by those who had the means of knowing, and the capacity for appreciating, your many and varied excellences of head and heart.

The church at Port Royal, in which is placed the beautiful tablet to the memory of my friend and relative, which I have above referred to, is worthy of a visit, were it only to observe the many tablets on its walls, inscribed with evidences of the destructiveness of yellow fever, which so often visits this part of the island. Port Royal, as some of my readers may be aware, stands on the extremity of a long, low, projecting, sandy point of land, which runs out from the side of the bay opposite Kingston, and which, by running across, (so as only to leave a neck as an entrance,) forms the bay or harbour of King-

ston. Outside, the entrance to the harbour is obstructed, and in part protected, by a number of low sandy islets, which make the navigation somewhat difficult for sailing vessels, or during the darkness of night. And it is to this part of the island—Port Royal and its neighbourhood—that the reader may safely ascribe all that he may have read or heard of the unhealthiness of the climate of Jamaica. To talk of the island generally as unhealthy, is nothing short of a villanous scandal. *It is quite the reverse.* And I question if there are, in the whole limits of this fair world, more healthy locations than are to be found among the lovely velvety vales, or amidst the mountain ranges and rugged crags of Jamaica's fair isle. And were there only this one island in the whole surrounding sea, the poet would have been only just when he described the West Indies as being a place where

“The breath of ocean wanders through their vales,  
In morning breezes and in evening gales.  
Earth from her lap perennial verdure pours,  
Ambrosial fruits and amaranthine flowers.  
Over wild mountains and luxuriant plains,  
Nature in all the pomp of beauty reigns.”

But the island is not all equally healthy ; and that Port Royal must be understood as excepted from the general character of salubrity which the island deserves, most persons will be satisfied, in visiting the interior of the parish church in that place, and having his attention directed to the many tablets on its walls, commemorative of the ravages of yellow fever, and remembering that it is the few who are thus



chronicled, while the many lie in unmarked and unremembered graves. I was particularly struck by one neat simple tablet, erected (as it bears) "by their sorrowing commander," to the memory of three youths, of the respective ages of thirteen, fifteen, and sixteen years—all of them midshipmen belonging to the same ship, and all of whom had fallen victims to yellow fever at Port Royal at about the same time. Poor boys! they had chosen a gallant but a dangerous profession; and had they fallen in the strife of contending ships, or midst the storms of elemental war, there would have been something so natural in their mode of exit from the scene, that the mind might not have been so impressed with the hearing of it. But

"They fell not in the battle's tug, or while their hopes were high;  
They sunk beneath the withering power of a scorching tropic sky."

## CHAPTER VII.

“The Negro, spoiled of all that nature gave  
To free-born man, thus sunk into a slave ;  
His passive limbs, to measured tasks confined,  
Obey the impulse of another mind—  
A silent, secret, terrible control,  
That rules his sinews and restrains his soul.  
Where'er their grasping arms the spoilers spread,  
The Negro's joys, the Negro's virtues fled.”

“Still, slavery ! thou art a bitter draught,  
Though thousands have been made to drink of thee.”

STERNE.

LEAVE JAMAICA—SAIL TO CUBA—BAY AND TOWN OF HAVANNA—  
GENERAL ASPECT OF HAVANNA—VOLANTE OR QUITRIN—OBJECTS OF  
INTEREST IN HAVANNA—GRAVE OF COLUMBUS—SLAVE TRADE OF  
HAVANNA—FRANCISCAN CHURCH AND ANECDOTE—JUDICIAL SYSTEM  
AND LAWS OF CUBA—CAPTAIN-GENERAL—CUBAN STATISTICS—  
PLAZA DE ARMAS—PASEO ISABEL—THEATRE TACON—CAMPO-SANTO  
—PUBLIC BATHS OF HAVANNA—BEAUTY OF CUBAN LADIES—CAFÉS  
—HOTELS—PUBLIC PRESS IN CUBA—CUARTADO SYSTEM—DOMESTIC  
AND FIELD LABOURERS, &c.—LEAVE CUBA.

A SAIL in the steamer, of somewhat less than four days, takes the traveller from Jamaica to the town of Havanna, in the island of Cuba, situated between north latitude  $19^{\circ}$  and  $23^{\circ}$ , and west longitude  $74^{\circ}$  and  $85^{\circ}$ . Cuba is the largest of the West Indian Islands, being not less than seven hundred miles in

length, by about eighty miles of average breadth, covering an area of about thirty-six thousand square miles, and at present containing a population of nearly a million and a half. It was discovered by Columbus on 28th October 1492, and enjoys the unfortunate distinction of having been the scene of the greatest of the cruelties perpetrated by his followers on the unresisting natives. Columbus named it *Ferdinando*, or, as some say, "*Juana*," but it speedily regained its ancient Indian name of "*Cuba*." It is now, and has all along (with the exception of the occupation of it by Great Britain for about a year) been in the possession of Spain, and it is now the chief of her slave colonies. For this, and for other substantial reasons, to be immediately noticed, Cuba is at present a place to which much interest attaches, and towards which a good deal of public attention is drawn.

The sail from Kingston, Jamaica, to the town of Havanna, in the island of Cuba, is along the south side of the first-named island—thence by the Grand Cayman, (a low sandy islet of considerable extent, famous for the turtle that frequent it, and dangerous to mariners,) on the east end of which we could see a vessel stranded, and on her beam ends, the sea breaking over her at every return of the waves.

On passing the Cayman, the sail lay along the coast of Cuba, round Point Antonio, and past the ledge of rocks called the *Collorados*, on which the very steamship in which I sailed—the *Tay*—had gone ashore and been very nearly lost only a very few years

before. Enlivened as the scene on board the steamer was by a very varied and miscellaneous freight of passengers, many of them destined for California, and with so many objects in sight, from time to time, to interest and amuse and call telescopes into requisition, the progress of time was scarcely remarked ; and it was with agreeable surprise that, about six o'clock of a very fine morning, on reaching the deck of the steamship, I found her entering the noble harbour of Havanna. Never will I forget the inspiriting nature of the beautiful scene. In point of formation, the harbour of Havanna has been justly described as being in shape like a trefoil, or shamrock—of which the entrance represents the stalk. This entrance is guarded by two seemingly very strong forts, named respectively the Punta and the Moro, standing on the right and left. Besides these two fortresses for protection, the harbour of Havanna is guarded by three other protective citadels, named respectively Cabanas, Principe, and Atares. At the time of my visit the harbour was crowded with shipping ; and so numerous and so various were the flags that were flying, that one might have supposed there were here marine representatives from all the nations of the world. I believe a similar scene presents itself here nearly at all times ; and some idea of the number of ships frequenting the port of Havanna, (which is of course by far the largest sea-port in Cuba) may be gathered from the fact that the American tonnage alone, now employed in the trade with Cuba, is 476,773 tons.

This is exclusive of the very large amount of British tonnage similarly engaged, and exclusive also of the tonnage of all the vessels from every other part of the globe. Indeed the study of the flags from the deck of the steamer was often a very amusing one. The British ensign, and the stars and stripes of the United States of America, floated conspicuous and from many a mast-head. There were also many other well-known insignia of the “battle and the breeze;” but there were also many which it passed my naval reminiscences to discover the country of, without inquiry or assistance—and sometimes despite of both.

Landing at Havanna—or to give it the more sonorous name with which Spain has dignified it—landing on the quay of “La Siempre Fidelissima Ciudad de San Cristobal de la Habana”—the first things to strike the stranger—at least if his landing be in the morning, previous to ten o’clock—will be the extreme noise, bustle, and activity of the scene into which he is suddenly plunged. Noises of every description assail his ears, sights of various kinds accost his eyes, and (last not least) odours of multifarious character salute his olfactories; and for these ’tis best he should be prepared. Thereafter, and after having called on such officials or other residents as he may have letters to, or has resolved to pay his respects to, (among the latter of whom will generally be the gentleman who now holds, so honourably and so usefully, the important office of Consul-general for Great Britain in the island of Cuba, and to whose personal kindness I rejoice to

have this opportunity of paying a passing tribute,) the first act of the stranger should be to hire a volante or quitrin, and take a drive in and about the town of Havanna, getting, if possible, a friend acquainted with the locality to accompany him in his ride. These vehicles are numerous, and are to be obtained at and after the rate of something less than a dollar (from three to four “pesétas”) an hour. The distinction between the volante and the quitrin consists simply in this, that while the hood of the former is immovable, the hood of the latter shifts up and down, so that it can be thrown back when the heat of the sun is not too intense. They constitute almost the only kind of carriage used in Cuba, and their use is nearly universal. So universal, that I question whether there is any one article a young Spaniard or Creole of Cuba would sooner name as one of the indispensables of gay life in Havanna. It is not easy to give in writing a description of this unique but singularly graceful and picturesque vehicle, which will convey a graphic idea of its appearance to a reader; and the aid of the draughtsman has accordingly been called in to assist the following attempt. It is hoped that the two combined will give the reader a graphic idea of the most appropriate and useful national vehicles to be found in any country in the world.

The volante or quitrin of Havanna has the head of a phaeton, and is placed upon two wheels of at least six feet in diameter. These wheels again are situated far back, at the very extremity of the shafts,

the body of the carriage being suspended by leathern straps or springs, and placed so low, that the head of the traveller is never above, and is generally below, the level of the upper section of the wheels. The shafts of the volante are very long, and the horse or mule (the latter species of animal being in most general use) is attached to the vehicle by traces; the back band being fixed to rings placed at the outer extremity of the shaft; so that there is no portion of the shaft before the horse's shoulder—or, indeed, nearer thereto than the back part of the saddle, on which the driver rides *en postillion*. The shafts being very long, there is thus necessarily a long space between the croupe of the horse and the splash-board of the carriage. The object gained by this, as well as that secured by the universal practice of plaiting and tying up the tail of the horse or mule, is protection from mud in event of the roads being dirty.

The volante, or quitrin, is generally drawn by one horse or mule; and, from the narrowness of the streets *intra muros*, it would be inconvenient to have more than one in very general use. This fact has given rise to the statement that, by police regulation, it is prohibited to drive more than one horse abreast in a volante within the walls of Havanna—a statement, however, for which there is no other foundation. Without the walls, and in the interior of the island, volantes are frequently seen with two and even three horses or mules abreast; the second and third, if there be so many, being harnessed and attached to

the carriage, outside the shafts, and much after the fashion known in Scotland under the term "outrigger." The conductor, called *il calesero*, is generally, if not always, a negro slave, and he rides on the horse or mule; and, where more than one is used, the outrigger, or one of the outriggers, is the one selected for that purpose. At first sight, and looking to the size and position of the wheels, the extreme length of the carriage, the distance of the horse from his draught, and the top-weight of heavy silver-mounted harness, and of the rider, which the animal carries, the impression is that the volante, or quitrin, is a carriage which must be very heavy to draw. But the smallness of the mules and horses in general use, the distances travelled, and the speed at which they move, lead to the conclusion that this is a mistake. At all events, this carriage is certainly a kind of conveyance remarkably well suited to a country like Cuba, where the streets of the towns are ill-paved, ill-kept, and uneven, and the country roads in general miserably bad. The wheels being very wide apart, it is next to impossible to overturn a volante; and, being very high, the ruts and stones upon the roads do not much incommode the traveller.

The private quitrin is usually a very handsome affair — glittering in silver ornaments, as does also the harness and other accoutrements of the horse and rider. My London friend and fellow-traveller, Mr D——, formed a desire to transport one of them from



the Pasco Isabel in Cuba, to Hyde Park, London; and, partly from curiosity, and partly to know what the experiment might cost, I inquired at various parties the price of such a vehicle, and found it to be somewhere between £90 and £120, according to the amount of ornament. But, without the black *calesero*, and his rich but *outré* dress, the volante would lose half of its attractions. He seems as if he were “to the manner born;” and the inability of transporting him with the carriage,

“As slaves cannot breathe in England,”

was in itself a preventive to my enthusiastic friend carrying his intention into effect. Indeed, the private *calesero* is a very unique object. In dress a cross between an officer of the Haytian army and a French postilion, he is usually garbed in a very handsome livery, richly embroidered with gold or silver lace, and a black hat with gold or silver band. The dress consisting of a jacket made of scarlet, green, or purple cloth or velvet, with white knee-breeches, and black leather greaves, boots or gaiters, highly polished, ornamented with silver, and coming nearly to a union with the shoe, but leaving at the front part of the foot a bare space, through which the black skin of the *calesero* displays itself. I did not observe a single instance in which the driver had stockings, but the black skin of the African had much the appearance of black silk ones.

Such is the private quitrin or volante ; and it being considered a mark of wealth to change the vehicle and livery almost every year, while the old ones are sold for public conveyances, the volantes to be had on hire are just the tarnished dittos of those above described. For short distances the rate of hire is from three pesétas (sixty cents) to a dollar per hour. For longer distanees, or where the vehicle is to be kept for several hours, a bargain should be made.

I could not ascertain that there were any means of finding out the exact number of such carriages at present in Havanna. They must, however, be very numerous. Almost every family of any note or means has its indispensable volante standing in the arched gateway, which thus forms at once the coach-house and the entrance to the dwellings, and oftentimes also the servants' hall ; and I find it stated in public returns that, at the census in 1827, the carriages, private as well as public, amounted to 2651. In that year, the number of houses, taking those without as well as those within the walls, was 11,639, (of which no less than 7968 were extra-mural.) Since that time, the number of houses has increased very greatly, and (*particularly since the passing of the English Sugar Duties Bill in 1846*) that of carriages has increased in a still greater ratio ; so that, at present, it would be quite safe to estimate their number at considerably above three thousand. Nor

will the estimate appear extravagant to any one who has seen the display of vehicles on the Paseo Isabel or Paseo Tacon, on a festive occasion.

Besides the forts or citadels, to which reference has already been made, and into which it is very difficult for a stranger to obtain access—so jealous is Spain in all things relating to her power—there are many objects of interest in the town of Havanna. But the first thing the visitor ought to do, should be to obtain one or two of the best general views to be had of the very unique but villanously odoriferous city in which he finds himself for the first time. In the approach by sea, he has already had one of the finest views of it. There is another very favourite view to be had from a hill, named to me “Indio,” which stands on the road between Regla and Guanabuco, on the side of the harbour opposite the town; and another looking back on the town from the road to Cerro, which is about three miles from Havanna. These views are all very fine, but they are all too distant for giving the visitor, on his immediate arrival, a bird’s-eye view of the place. For this latter purpose, I advise a visit to the top of the hill on which stands the Cabañas fortress, which overlooks the town and harbour, and from which a very beautiful and very accessible general view of Havanna is to be had. To one who has never visited the tropics, it is difficult to give a clear enough idea of the bright vividness with which each distinctive building and characteristic of a

tropical town stands out in the clear liquid light, without any haze or smoke to interrupt the view. After obtaining a general view of the whole, the next thing should be to visit, in detail, the various objects of interest which the town contains : such as—the church in which mass was first performed in the island by Columbus and his followers in 1492 ; the cathedral, and the tomb therein where repose the ashes of the great Colon ; the Dominican church ; the Plaza de Armas, in which is the residence of the Captain-general, as the governor of the island is called ; the Tacon theatre and the Paseo Tacon ; the Tacon prison ; the Campo Santo, or public cemetery of Havanna ; the Caza Beneficencia ; the Valla de Gallos or cock-pits, &c.,—devoting to each of them such a measure of time and attention as the tastes, professions, and habits of the visitor may dispose him to bestow.

In the cathedral mass is performed every morning about seven or eight o'clock, and this is therefore a favourable, as well as a favourite hour of the day for visiting it. It is an ancient building, with nothing very striking or remarkable either in its style or construction ; but it is at the same time a handsome and an elegantly finished edifice. There are some pictures of merit on its walls ; in particular, one small picture near the principal altar, and which has below it an inscription on a brass-plate, descriptive of its claims on account of its great antiquity, as well as of its excellence. On the right of the principal altar

there is the marble tablet on the wall above the spot where lies what was mortal of him

“Who seann’d Columbia through the wave.”

This tablet is about six or eight feet square, and contains a highly relieved bust of the great Colon, bearing the image usually given as his likeness. Beneath the image is an inscription, which, of course, says nothing of the chains and imprisonments with which the gratitude of Spain rewarded this man—the greatest of her benefactors, and the discoverer of a new world. The inscription is in these words—

“O restos e imagen del grande Colon !  
Mi siglos durad guardados en la urna  
Y en remembranza de nuestra nacion.”

*Translation.*

“O remains and image of the great Columbus !  
For a thousand ages continue preserved in this urn  
And in the remembrance of our nation.”

Columbus died in Spain, and his body rested for some time there ; first in a convent at Valladolid, and afterwards in a magnificent monument in the Carthusian monastery at Seville, erected to the memory of Columbus by King Ferdinand, and on which is recorded the fact that—

“To Castille and to Leon  
A new world Columbus gave.”

In the year 1536 the justly venerated remains were, with great pomp and circumstance, removed from Seville, and transported to Hispaniola or St Domingo,

then the chief possession of Spain in the West Indian Archipelago ; but on the island of St Domingo, or Hispaniola, being ceded to the French, the honoured remains were again, with pomp and array greater even than before, removed to the place where they now lie, in the cathedral of the city of Havanna. This last transition was completed on the 15th of January 1796 ; and since then, the bones of the greatest of discoverers have remained undisturbed. Whether the last is to be their final migration, remains yet to be seen. Whether Spain is to retain Cuba, and whether, in the event of her being induced or compelled to cede her possession of the island, these venerated relics of the discoverer of the New World will be allowed to rest in the cathedral of Havanna, are questions which remain yet to be determined, but which will, in all probability, not remain much longer unresolved. I shall not here attempt to discuss the question of whether any justifiable effort could be made by the United States of America to possess herself of Cuba, by purchase or otherwise ; or whether the American government would be acting wisely were it to make such an attempt ; or whether the debt, owing by Spain to Great Britain, would entitle the latter to forbid and prevent any such contract : but I am inclined to believe, that Cuba would be a much better customer of England in the hands of our enterprising brethren of the New World, than she is at present in the hands of Spain ; and I will without hesitation affirm, that the loss of Cuba would only be a just retribution—an act of

retributive justice—suffered by Spain, not only for her cruelties to the aborigines, but also for the dishonourable manner in which she has made use of her possession of this island to evade the performance of her obligations contracted to and with England in the matter of the slave-trade. There can be no doubt of the fact, that during the last year the importation of slaves into the island of Cuba has been carried on in full vigour—so vigorously and extensively, that the price of slaves had fallen, in consequence of the plentiful supply, from four hundred and fifty or five hundred, to from two hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars. This fact is notorious, and I heard it authenticated by official authority. It is equally notorious in the island itself, that the agent of the Queen Mother of Spain was and is extensively engaged in the infamous traffic; and it is more than suspected that, directly or indirectly, his royal mistress is a large participator in the heavy gains her agent realises from this trade in human flesh. Indeed, the traffic is little short of being a legalised one: the amount of dollars payable to the governor or to the Government (for there is much difference between these two) being, if not fixed by law or order, at least as well understood as if it were so. All this is, of course, in direct and manifest violation of the engagements and treaties made by Spain with England; and it is an ascertained fact that fully one-half of the slaves in Cuba are there held in abject bondage in violation of these solemn treaties and engagements.

Indeed, were it otherwise, it were nearly impossible that the Spanish colonists of Cuba could find slaves to cultivate their fields. Every one who knows Cuba, and the brutal manner in which the great mass of the *agricultural* slaves are treated there, will laugh at the idea of the slave population of Cuba being self-supporting. Thanks to the lesson our Sugar Duties Bill of 1846 has taught them, the Cubans know well not only that slave labour is cheaper than free labour—so much cheaper that they can actually make, for seven or eight shillings per hundredweight, the sugar that costs the British, Danish, or French colonist, at the very least, ten to twelve or fourteen shillings per hundredweight. But their knowledge of the statistics of the trade does not stop here; they also know that it is much cheaper to import slaves than to breed them. The planter in Cuba found this to be the case, even when the vigilance of the British and French cruisers had made slaves so scarce in Cuba, that the price of an able-bodied one was fully five hundred dollars. Of course, now that such vigilance has been, for a time at least, relaxed, and the price of slaves has fallen to from two hundred and fifty to three hundred dollars, the greater economy of keeping up the breed by importation is too plain to be overlooked. Hence it is that the idea of a self-supporting system seems to be quite out of the Cuban's calculations, and that in the barracoons on his estates there are often to be found numerous bands of males and but a very few females, or oftentimes none at all.



It has been said, and it is generally credited by intelligent parties resident in Cuba, that the average duration of the life of a Cuban slave, after his arrival in the island, does not exceed seven or eight years. In short, that he is worked out in that time. His bodily frame cannot stand the excessive toil for a longer period; and, after that average period, his immortal spirit escapes from the tortured tenement of clay. Ye extenuators of slavery and of the slave trade, ponder this ascertained fact. Is it not enough to make the flesh creep, and to unite all civilised mankind to put an end at least to the traffic in slaves? Civilised men may reasonably differ in opinion as to how this is best to be accomplished—whether by treaties, commissions and blockading squadrons, or by legislative measures having for their object the diminishing the heavy seductive profits now realising from the produce of slave cultivation and manufacture, or by a wise union of both. But surely one and all must agree in the position, that a nobler work never was adventured on by any nation than the destruction of the slave trade. For the present, England and France have the honour of standing almost alone in the furtherance of this great cause. It is to be hoped that neither of them will abandon their philanthropic labours, even although they may find it expedient to change the direction of them—to alter the *modus operandi*. It is the rather to be hoped that their example will dispose the other great powers, who have themselves already wiped off the stain of a parti-

cipation in the slave trade from their national escutcheons, to follow the example, and join in the crusade. The United States of America, though they have not yet put an end to slavery on their own soil, have, at all events, prohibited the importation of slaves into their Union, and have, therefore, every interest to move them to aid in compelling Spain and Brazil to the adoption of the same course. Denmark not only preceded other countries in declaring the slave trade to be piracy, but she has lately manumitted the slaves in her own colonies. And when, if ever, the standards of England and of France, the “stars and stripes” of the United States of America (do not “the stripes” sound ominously?) and the national ensigns of Denmark and of Holland, are found zealously co-operating in this sacred cause of humanity, who can doubt but that this trade in human flesh, this gross violation of all natural right and law, would speedily be suppressed? But even should England and France stand alone, it is to be hoped that they will not desert the cause. The absence of co-operation may render expedient a change in the mode of carrying on the operations; but there can be no cause either for desertion or for despair. Nature, and the God of Nature, are manifestly fighting on the same side; and no one who has read the signs of human progress for the last century, but must see that slavery and the slave trade are among the things that are doomed to give way before the advancing light of the sun of civilisation. As to the mode and time for putting an end to

slavery, where it is interwoven with the institutions of the country, as is the case in the southern states of America, there may be some, there is much, difficulty; and I confess I am of those who think that some of the emancipationists of the United States, and of their brethren in England, have acted and are acting injudiciously, in the conduct by which they have attempted and are attempting to precipitate events in that country. But slavery in those countries into which the importation of slaves is not permitted, or secretly connived at, is but a modified slavery, compared with that which exists in countries into which there is such importation. Assuredly, then, the first step is to put an end to the traffic—to dry up the source of the supplies from without—ere we can expect either much to ameliorate the condition of, or to strike the shackles from those who are within. Nor is it only by treaties that Spain and Brazil are bound to cease their illegal traffic in human flesh. England has paid them large sums of money as the condition of their doing so; and these sums they have received and accepted, under the annexed and expressed condition. It has been unjustly said by some writers on the other side of the Atlantic—writers evidently in the pay of those who think it for their interest to prevent their country from sharing in the glory Great Britain has acquired, and will acquire, by her efforts for suppressing and putting an end to the horrors of the slave trade—that Great Britain has no right to interfere with Spain and

Brazil, as regards this trade in their own colonies ; that slavery is a domestic institution, with which foreign nations have nothing whatever to do ; and that, in debarring Spain and Brazil from the conduct of this traffic, the British lion is doing little more than acting the bully. Such writers forget the contract part of the matter. Were England seeking, by threat or force of arms, to promote the emancipation of slaves within any country or any colony, large or small, there might be some foundation for the argument. As it is, there is none. She is only demanding and requiring that Spain and Brazil should do what they have promised and engaged to do, what they have been paid for doing, but what they have hitherto failed to perform. Happy is it for England that, in enforcing these claims, she is fighting in the sacred cause of humanity ; and happy will it be for the other powerful nations already referred to, if their rulers see it their duty, or their interest, to give their zealous co-operation in the same great and noble cause.

Another argument against enforcing our slave treaties, which is not unfrequently used, particularly at home, is, that the effectual suppression of the slave trade is simply an impossibility. In other words, that the profit acquired by the importation of a slave is just in proportion to the difficulty of importing him ; and that human cupidity is such, that any amount of risk will be run, where there is the prospect of a proportionate gain. The corollary from this, of course, is, that the effect of sending out cruisers to put down

the trade is but to increase to the slaves the awful horrors of what is called the middle passage, by causing the slavers to be built small and low, and solely with a view to their sailing powers and capacities, and without any regard to the health and comfort of the unfortunate slaves themselves.

This argument is not unfrequently heard even in England. But (apart from the fact that it only touches one mode of suppressing the slave trade) its importance diminishes on investigation, and that for this simple reason, that there is a limit beyond which the price of a slave cannot go even in Cuba or Brazil. The slave-owner cannot afford *any* price for a slave, or more than the prices he himself gets for his slave-grown produce enable him to give. This, then, fixes a *maximum* of the price to be received for the article to be imported. The cost of importation, on the other hand, just depends on the extent of difficulty in the way. And in point of fact—and this is the practical answer—when the slave treaties were a few years ago better enforced, when the English and French preventive cruisers on the coast of Africa were more numerous and more vigilant, and consequently more successful, the price of slaves so rose in Cuba, that the demand for them greatly abated—seeing that at the price of importation the planters could scarce afford to buy. This fact is indisputable, and speaks volumes, and furnishes the best argument in favour of the position with which I conclude these remarks—introduced here *par parenthèse*—that justice, duty, interest, and humanity, call

upon Great Britain to enforce the slave treaties, and that it were just and noble, and a wise policy in the United States, as well as in the governments of France, Denmark, and Holland, to unite with England in the sacred cause. Besides, it is not only, or even chiefly, by means of preventive squadrons that the Spanish and Brazilian slave trade is to be effectually suppressed. Great Britain and France have other effective measures within their reach ; and of these some mention will be made in an after part of this book.

But to return to the celebrities of Havanna. The church in which Columbus first had mass performed, when he landed at Cuba in 1492, is not interesting in any way, save because it enjoys the distinction referred to. In the Dominican church, the only object that struck me was one common enough in churches in Catholic countries, being an altar-piece where the scene of the " Marys at the crucifixion " is represented by highly-relieved, tawdrily-dressed female figures, one of them having a crown on, and both exhibiting all the appearances or signs of the deepest agony and woe. At the time of my first visit to this fashionable place of Roman Catholic worship in Havanna, there were a number of devotees performing their devotions around the shrine or altar-piece in question, which, an inscription tells the visitor, was erected by special authority from a Pope Pius. In the dim cathedral light the eyes of the waxen figures seemed to be liquid with real tears, and their bosoms to swell and heave beneath the yellow satin, with real heart-

rending sighs; while on the cheeks of some of the worshippers who knelt around there were the evidences of sincerity and of genuine sorrow. I confess I cannot view a scene like this without emotion; and while my calmer reason does deeply deplore the fact that such devotion should be elicited by the exhibition of a mere semblance of human woe, I cannot refuse my respect, where the sincerity of the act is so apparent, much less could I “curse the shrine” where so many devout worshippers kneel to heaven.

There is another church, or at least a building which was once a church, in Havanna, which I deem worthy of notice, as it affords me an opportunity of recording a characteristic anecdote.

On passing through one of the narrow streets of this town of strange scenes, handsome buildings, but unsavoury smells, and in the immediate neighbourhood of the British Consulate, I observed an inscription over the door of a large building, which ran thus—

“La Commissaria de obras de Fortificacion.”

Struck with the church-like appearance of the edifice, (despite its built-up windows,) and surprised that a consecrated building should, by so priest-ridden a people, be made a storehouse for warlike commodities, I made some inquiry on the subject; and, learning that the building was called the “Church of the Franciscans,” my previous knowledge of some passages of Cuban history enabled me to understand the nature and cause of the transition from a Roman Catholic church to a military storehouse.

The state religion in Cuba is, of course, that of the Roman Catholic church; and, true to its natural policy, that church has there succeeded in getting liberty of *public* worship denied to all creeds save its own. But after the storming of the town and fortress of Havanna, by the British expedition under Lord Albemarle, in 1762, his lordship, as governor, demanded of the Roman Catholic bishop that he should set aside one of the churches for the Protestants to worship in; and a somewhat amusing correspondence ensued between Lord Albemarle and the reverend bishop on the subject. The bishop, if he did not explicitly refuse, at least diplomatised and evaded the demand, till brought to the point by the intimation from Lord Albemarle that, if a church was not assigned, "I shall take that which seems to be most suitable." This produced a reply, that since he, Lord Albemarle, "had so resolved, he might take whatever church he chose;" and it would be only prejudice to deny that, in this reply, there was much both of dignity and simplicity. The British governor took the bishop at his word. He chose the Church of the Franciscans; and during the one year's occupation of the island by Britain, and till the restitution of it to Spain in 1763, public worship, according to the forms of the Protestant Church of England, was regularly performed in the Franciscan church of Havanna. Then, of course, it was restored to Spain with the rest of the island, in accordance with that extra liberal and lavish policy which has so often guided British councils, leading at



one time to the expenditure of great amounts of blood and treasure in the acquisition of territory, (witness in these seas Martinique, Guadaloupe, St Thomas', and Cuba,) and the almost free surrender, or gift of them, back to the powers whence they were taken. Since that restitution of the island to Spain, the church of the Franciscans has ceased to be used as a church. Is its disuse to be ascribed to its supposed contamination by the heretics? One is almost irresistibly tempted to apply the *post hoc propter hoc* style of argument to such a case; and no one who has personally witnessed the light-obstructing spirit evinced by the Romish church, in such a dark spot as the isle of Cuba, where she is alone and triumphant in her domination, and is allowed the most ample scope for her pasos\* and other ceremonials, will think the deduction an extravagant or an unjust one. At all events, the fact is as I have described it. The church selected by Lord Albemarle as a place for Protestant worship, is now used by Spain as a government storehouse—"La comissaria de obras de fortificacion."

It may seem a contradiction to the character above assigned by me to the island of Cuba, as the seat both of a civil and a religious despotism, that there should be a considerable number of newspapers published in Havanna. But such is the fact. Indeed, it is a

\* A paso is the name given in Spain to the idol figures borne along in the religious processions. The paso, however, strictly speaking, means only the figure of our Saviour, during his Passion. Such processions and pasos are numerous in Cuba.

somewhat anomalous circumstance connected with the history and present state even of the mother-country of Spain, that, notwithstanding her literary deficiencies and state of ignorance, of which so much has been written, newspapers appear to flourish greatly both in Spain and her colonies. In Madrid there are no fewer than thirteen daily papers—being nearly as great a number as is published even in London; and some of these, such as the *Heraldo*, *Clamor Publico*, &c., have a very large circulation. But the newspapers of Havanna are most of them of small size, and much filled with advertisements; amongst which those offering negroes, sometimes female negroes with infant children, to be sold “with or without the child,” will strike the mind of an Englishman with anything but an agreeable feeling. These papers are likewise all under a very strict and rigorous censorship—so strict that the wonder is that there should be so many, and that they are so good as they are.

The island of Cuba sends deputies to the Spanish Cortes at Madrid—Spain, like republican France, having in this respect adopted a course which many think, and the writer amongst the number, might be very advantageously followed in regard to the colonies of Great Britain. Besides the advantage of having colonial interests represented at home by parties nominated by the colonists themselves, and in whose fairness of representation the colonists repose confidence, there could not surely be a better mode of

making our colonial brethren practically aware that they are, as they are entitled to be, regarded as an integral part of the empire. Much might be written on this subject; but it were out of place to continue it here—and therefore to return to Cuba.

The Governor or Captain-general of Cuba may be said to enjoy nearly despotic power. Indeed I was assured by a very accomplished travelling Spaniard, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Cuba, and whose society I afterwards enjoyed during my voyage thence to America, that the present Governor (Roncali, Count of Alcoy) exercised his power here in a way more completely despotic than the head of the monarchy of Spain could, or at least does do, in the mother country. This gentleman, himself a member of the legal profession, assured me that he was by numbers of his own body informed that Roncali had, since his arrival in the island, constituted himself as a supreme tribunal, having jurisdiction exclusive of, or co-ordinate with, that of all the other courts in the island, and competent to the adjudication of all kinds of cases. I had not the opportunity of witnessing his Excellency's freaks in this so-called summary court of justice; but if half what I heard of it were true, it must be a strange sight, in a civilised country, to see a comparatively illiterate soldier professing to decide, of his own knowledge and judgment, and after a few minutes, chiefly occupied by his own laying down of the law, questions involving intricate facts, disputed rights, and important principles. The

defendant is summoned to the Governor's presence by a small writ, which contains no explanation save that a claim is made upon him by a party named; and it is said that—as indeed in some courts in more civilised, or at least freer countries—the plaintiff, the person who first applies for Count Roncali's aid, has always the best chance. Such is an account of the “private courts of the Captain-general of Cuba,” as it was communicated to me on the spot. It is, however, only fair to add, that previous governors did something of the same kind, and also that other writers seem not to have regarded this secret tribunal, and its summary mode of procedure, in the same objectionable light as is here done. A late writer on Spain, when treating incidentally of her colonies, remarks, with reference to Cuba, that “the Governor gives audiences to the inhabitants in private disputes—a patriarchal procedure, by which much litigation is avoided.”!!

In the ordinary courts of the island, the judicial proceedings are conducted in writing, *vivâ voce* pleading being almost, if not wholly, unheard-of. The fees of the lawyers depend upon the length of the written pleadings, and the judges are also paid by fees.

The law in use is, of course, that of the mother country of Spain, based, like that of Scotland, on the Code Justinian. The law of bankruptcy also seemed to me, from what I could learn of it, to be not very dissimilar, in principle at least, to that of Scotland.

The affairs of a bankrupt are arranged, generally, under a *concurso voluntario y preventivo*, which seems a kind of trust-deed, by which the bankrupt is deprived of all power of alienating, or making away with his estate and effects to favoured creditors, or confident parties, to the prejudice of the general body. Another mode of winding up a bankrupt estate is by what is called a “cession de biens,” which seemed in reality, as well as in name, to be something like the Scotch deed of *cessio bonorum*, whereby a debtor yields up everything to a trustee for the general behoof of his creditors, on condition of getting a discharge, which discharge emanates from the court.

Such is the nature of the ordinary tribunals of justice in the island of Cuba ; but, of course, Count Roucali’s “patriarchal” jurisdiction, as it is exclusive of these, so it sets itself above the principles which restrain the regularly trained judges.

It is also said, and universally credited, that the present Captain-general views the slave trade with an indulgent eye. At all events, it is indisputable that the importation of slaves into the island, which fell off greatly under the influence of England, and the activity of the English cruisers, during the latter years of the dynasty of the late governor, (Count O’Donnel,) has of late years, and since the Count of Alcoy assumed the reins of government, received a fresh impetus, and is now flourishing in fullest vigour. How far the Governor is personally concerned in the production of this result, it were next

to impossible to ascertain exactly ; but assuredly his correspondence with the representative of Britain in the island, as to the landing of slaves, in the course of which the British Consul-general offered to give his Excellency ocular evidence of the truth of his informant's story—that slaves had been lately landed from a slaver, and were then in course of sale—does not indicate any desire either to suppress the traffic or to keep faith with Britain. Indeed, it is publicly affirmed that a regularly fixed fee (some fifty dollars a-head) is exacted by the Governor on each slave that is brought in, besides sundry other fees to the captain of the port or harbour-master, and other officials, who have the power of prevention more or less in their hands. In short, the system is a complete one, and completely inoculated into the principles of Cuban government. No doubt, a semblance of respect for the solemn treaties made with Britain, and for the entering into which Spain has been paid, is kept up in the island. The barbarian victims of the inhuman slave trade are exposed to sale not as slaves, but as “ goods ” or “ merchandisc,” (*bultos*,) and some such farce is occasionally exhibited as this:—A few of the imported slaves—such of them as are sick, disabled, infirm, or likely to die, and of course are of little or no value—are taken possession of by Government authority, and an attempt is made to “ throw dust in the eyes of the English,” by making a noise about the matter, and formally delivering up the miserable wretches, thus “ seized,” as slaves imported into

Cuba, in violation of the solemn treaties made by Spain with England—much being vaunted, at the time, of Spanish honour and national good faith. If anything could make matters worse than the real disregard of the treaties, it would be conduct such as this—hypocrisy added to dishonesty, and the whole veiled in high-sounding words. And yet such pretended seizures and deliveries are often taking place. One had occurred only a few days before I reached Cuba, the number then seized being under twenty; while the known number of slaves actually introduced into the island, during that and the previous month, had not been less than four thousand, and while the average rate of present import is not under two thousand per month.

Could any one, who has personally ascertained the truth of transactions and occurrences such as those before recorded, feel much regret were Cuba to pass out of the hands of Spain into those of the United States Government, or of any other civilised country which would keep better faith? If Cuba is to be ceded or bought at a cheap rate, Great Britain has unquestionably a much better right to her than any other power; and it were perhaps unjust, and, therefore, a thing England would not permit, were Spain to treat with any other country for the sale of Cuba, without first making payment of, or provision for, a large part of her debt to Great Britain. But the possession of Cuba by England were a matter more to be hoped for than to be expected. England had Cuba once, and

generously (perhaps Quixottically) gave it back again to Spain. And to reacquire the possession, either by purchase or otherwise, would seem to be contrary to the general course of that policy which is now, and which has for a long time been, pursued by our noble country ; for certainly, and particularly after the experience of late events in India, no one can justly accuse England of an undue thirst for territorial acquisition. But I could not personally hear the grandiloquence of Spanish authorities in Cuba, or their contemptuous indifference to the treaties made with Great Britain, without almost wishing that some other power would step in, and obtain possession of the island. Were the United States of America to do so—and there is little doubt but the late secret expedition showed that the leaning of the popular mind was such that “the people,” at least, would not be very scrupulous about the *modus acquirendi*—it would look something like retributive justice, inasmuch as it would be the descendants, at least, of the country with which Spain has not kept faith, who would then be the instruments of avenging the deception. Without professing any extravagance of affection for America or Americans, or thinking them, as a nation, either so far advanced or so great as they think themselves, I confess I do regard them as infinitely nearer to ourselves by blood, and tongue, and tie of every kind, than any other nation on the face of the earth.

No doubt, there are serious objections to the acquisi-



tion of Cuba by the United States of America. In the first place, there is the important want of a *causa belli* to justify anything like a forcible seizure. In not making with Spain such treaties as England has done, and covenanting with her for the suppression of the slave trade, and paying her money as the price of her consent, America has deprived herself of a justifying cause for warlike proceedings against Cuba, which she might now have turned to very good account. In the second place, a successful arrangement for the sale of Cuba from Spain to America, not only labours under the little less than certainty of the powerful *veto* of England and France, but presumes that the cautious Yankee would pay Spain a much larger price for the possession than the island would be worth to himself. Spanish writers on Cuba call it the brightest jewel in the Spanish crown. Whether it be a jewel or not, (and it may be so, were the fable true which makes each toad the possessor of a jewel,) Cuba is at least Spain's richest colonial possession, and a source of a great part of her revenue. The value of Cuba to Spain is but little known to those who deem the acquisition of it by the United States, by a transaction of sale and purchase, a matter of probability. Cuba contains a superficies of thirty-seven thousand square miles; and a better idea of the extent of it will be formed by the Englishman, when he is reminded of the fact, that England (exclusive of Scotland) does not contain above 58,335 square miles. The present population of Cuba is estimated at 1,400,000—con-

sisting of 610,000 whites, 190,000 free people of colour, and 600,000 slaves. Each of these slaves is worth from three hundred to three hundred and fifty dollars—making the gross value of the whole between one hundred and eighty and two hundred and ten millions of dollars, or (estimating the dollar at four shillings) between £36,000,000 and £42,000,000 sterling. Again, the value of exports from Cuba during 1848 was within a trifle of twenty-eight million of dollars, or £5,600,000 sterling; its imports during same year being 32,389,119 dollars. In the same year, the number of arrivals of ships at Cuban ports was 3740, and of departures 3310. Already there are nearly two hundred miles of railroad finished in the island, and above fifty miles more in course of being made. Indeed, the first railway laid down in the West Indies was laid down in Cuba. This railroad was originally formed to connect the capital, Havanna, with the town of Guines, which is distant about twenty-five miles, through a smooth and fertile country. This railway is now connected with San Carlos de Matanzas, one of the principal seaports of the island, and a prosperous, though as yet but small town. Other branches connect the same railway with other parts of the coast; and thus the whole length of railway already open is about one hundred and ninety-five miles. The engineer of the original line from Havanna to Guines was a Mr Alfred Cruger of America, but the capital was English, being negotiated for in London by Mr Alexander Robertson.

The nominal capital was about half a million, but, being negotiated for at a high percentage, it did not produce more than about £340,000. There are also several steamers plying between the different ports of the island, and, in particular, steamers from Havanna to Matanzas, (a sail of about fifty miles;) and also steamers to Cardenas and St Juan de Remedios, calling at intermediate places; besides a ferry steamer between Havanna and Regla, on the opposite side of the harbour of Havanna. To this add that, while the island is very fertile, and yields largely, even at present, and under deficient culture, there is not above two-fifths of it cultivated; and not only is there a very large tract of fertile country uncultivated, but even many of those parts which are incapable of culture are covered with forests of mahogany, cedars, and a great variety of tropical and other woods of the most valuable kind. Cuba also contains valuable copper mines, which are now worked, and which are capable of being worked to much greater advantage and extent.

These details may be useful to the party who wishes to form an opinion as to the probability of a compact between Jonathan and Don Hidalgo of Spain, for the sale and purchase of the island of Cuba, about which so much is said. It also explains, in some measure, how it happens that Cuba is able to supply so liberally the Royal Exchequer of Spain, as to acquire for herself the more appropriate than elegant title of "The milch-cow of Spain."

Of course it is the fact that, by permitting the importation of slaves, a sufficient supply of good cheap labour is obtained, that makes Cuba so valuable a possession to Spain; and equally of course, were America to acquire Cuba, the nefarious source of gain must cease. For although the United States of America have not yet followed the example of Great Britain, by the emancipation of the slaves within her territory—and it must in candour be admitted that there still exist great difficulties in the way of her doing so—yet she has long ago blotted out participation in the slave trade from among her national delinquencies; and it is not to be thought of, that she would go back upon her onward course so far as to permit the importation of slaves into any part of her dominions or possessions. Indeed, an attempt so to do would cost that which a true American most dreads—would cost the Union itself. A legalising of slave traffic by America, in any way, would inevitably lead to the dismemberment of the Union. The free States unquestionably would not endure it. Even were she to get Cuba, America would get it under implied pledges, destructive of its value as a place of production.

But while, for the above reasons, I neither think it likely America will buy Cuba, nor have the same horror that some express at the idea of her taking it, I also differ from those who think that the possession of Cuba by the United States would strengthen the hands of the supporters of the slave system in America

itself, and procrastinate or prevent the settlement of that question—the great national question of the American continent. *If it did, the possession would be to America herself a curse instead of a blessing.* But my conviction is, that it would just leave the slave question where it is ; while, at the same time, it would effectually put an end to the traffic in slaves—at least in so far as Cuba was concerned—and thereby prevent and put an end to much of the injurious competition to which the produce of our own colonists (which is supplied by means of free labour) is exposed, by the nefarious conduct of the Spanish colonist in supplying himself with the cheapest of all labour, and that by means of the violation of the treaties made by his country with Great Britain. That slave labour—at least when there is a mart out of which the ravages made by excessive toil may be supplied—is much cheaper than free labour, is now an ascertained fact — ascertained in the best of all ways — by actual experience of the consequences. So long as the Spanish colonist finds it cheaper to steal slaves or to buy them, knowing them to have been stolen, (which is nearly the same thing,) he will never breed them. It is idle to expect that he will. It is quite notorious that the slave population of Cuba is almost entirely supported by importation of slaves from the coast of Africa ; and that the average duration of the life of a slave, after he arrives in the island of bondage, does not exceed seven or eight years :

while it is equally well known that this cheap labour has been supplied to the Spanish colonist (at the expense of the British colonist whose produce is depreciated by it,) since the year 1820—and in manifest, open outrage and defiance of the treaty made in 1817 between the governments of Great Britain and of Spain, whereby his Catholic Majesty engaged that the slave trade should be abolished throughout the entire dominions of Spain, on the 30th of May 1820; and that from that period it “should not be lawful for any of the subjects of the crown of Spain *to purchase slaves, or to carry on the slave trade on the coast of Africa upon any pretext or in any manner whatever.*” The sixth article of this treaty is as follows,—“His Catholic Majesty will adopt, in conformity to the spirit of this treaty, the measures which are best calculated to give *full and complete* effect to the laudable objects which the high contracting parties have in view.” How this treaty has been kept the historic muse will tell, to the immortal honour of that England which has been so long foremost in every work of humanity, and to the eternal disgrace of Spain: recording, as she must do, the signal, and at one time nearly successful efforts of England to suppress the traffic, and her expenditure of blood and treasure in her persevering endeavours so to do; and the base deceptive conduct of Spain in violating her solemn engagement, by permitting above thirty thousand Africans, (on a general average,) torn from their

homes, to be annually imported into Cuba and Porto Rico alone, and there sold as slaves. It is not easy for one but lately come from visiting such scenes, and from viewing their disastrous effects on the condition of the honest, upright, and intelligent British planter in our own colonial possessions in the West Indies, to write with temper of such matters. And again, I submit it to the public of my native country, that were Spain's debt to England, and for repayment of which Cuba may be considered as part of the security, duly provided for and secured, there is little or no interest which could or should prevent England from viewing the occupation of Cuba by our brethren of the United States of America with feelings of complacency. For the honour of America herself, such occupation, if it is to be gone about, should be gone about only on some justifying cause, or by a legitimate transaction of sale; and any gross violation of justice or the law of nations in the matter might justify or require the intervention of England, or the other powers of Europe in alliance with Spain, to forbid the bans between the United States and Cuba. But so far as interest is concerned, and apart from the question that Cuba forms part of the security for Spain's debt to Great Britain, interest to prevent American annexation England has none. I am aware that other writers have expressed themselves differently, but I cannot see the grounds of their opinions; and I know that there are in England persons who entertain an unworthy jealousy towards America,

just as there are in the United States a great number of illiterate prejudiced persons, chiefly composed of renegade sons of Great Britain herself, who entertain unworthy and jealous feelings towards England. But such parties should be excluded from the consideration of the good, the true, and the well-informed, on both sides of the Atlantic; and while I have long known that the body of intelligent men in Great Britain look with extreme interest on the rapid advancement in knowledge, in art, and in science, of the young republic of America—remembering the source whence they sprang, and feeling anything but regret that, actuated by the feelings which animated their sires, they effectually resisted the tyranny of the Government of the mother country—I also know that there are a vast number of intelligent, enlightened Americans, who look with friendly feelings towards England, and regard with pride and pleasure, not only their descent from her, and their common origin with her, but also the many matchless institutions which England possesses, and her noble efforts in the great cause of humanity. An American friend of my own, an officer of the American navy, whom I met with when at St Kitt's, and again at Santa Cruz, expressed the same feeling strongly to me in conversation when he said, "You are going to my country, sir; and, when travelling, you may hear much nonsense talked of England and America, and their feelings and position as regards each other; but, take my word for it, if America would ever like to see the Old Country embroiled in



a war with all the rest of Europe, it would only be because it would afford her an opportunity of stepping in to her relief, and fighting upon England's side." On another occasion, an intelligent Bostonian remarked to me at Niagara, that certainly the States were more jealous of insult from England than from any other country in the world. I asked why, assuring him that no intelligent man in England reciprocated this feeling; and his candid answer was, "Because, I suspect, we respect Great Britain more than we do any other country, and next to ourselves." Sincerely do I trust that my naval friend will never have the opportunity of showing his or his country's affection for Great Britain in the manner he so characteristically indicated. But I think there is much truth in the Bostonian's courteous explanation; and I deem it simply an act of justice, and of gratitude for the many kindnesses I received when in the United States of America, to record whatever fact is likely to tend to promote friendly relations between two countries which stand almost in the relationship of parent and child. And most sincerely honest am I in stating it to be a conviction formed, even after travelling through the length and breadth of the United States, that there is among the intelligence of America a much kindlier feeling towards Great Britain than is generally believed in this country.

Even if America gets Cuba, the possession may not be very valuable to herself (whatever it is under the present system to Spain;) but her doing so will, at all

events, put an end to the slave trade, in so far at least as the importation of slaves into Cuba is concerned. And who doubts but that the system of slavery itself runs a chance of much more speedy abolishment at the hands of free and enlightened America, than at the hands of bigoted and enslaved Spain? Even the Southern planter, who most dreads emancipation—even the champion of that party which most opposed emancipation—even Colonel Hayne himself, who has in Congress most loudly, and I confess I think with some justice, complained against the conduct of the apostles of the Emancipationist party, who—

“ Fire in each eye, and paper in each hand,  
Declaim and preach throughout the land,”

scattering firebrands among a people ready to be excited to violence—even parties such as these carry their arguments against emancipation no farther than this, that the proper time for it has not yet come. None of them, that I ever heard, say that the time is never to come. All they contend for is delay to prepare the country, the institutions, and the people for the change; and that in some sort of way it should be a gradual one. In short, all parties in England and America seem to agree in this, that slavery as a system has received its death-blow, although it is not yet extinct in the United States; and confident do I feel, from personally witnessing the feeling, both of the northern and southern States, hearing influential senators and others talk of it, and reading the

local papers on both sides when on the spot, that a distinct, emphatic denial of this truth, on the part of the south, would lead to the mooted question of a "Repeal of the American Union."

But to return to Cuba, and to the scenes of this unique town of Havanna, with its narrow streets, and gay promenades, drives, and inhabitants.

The Plaza de Armas is a public square near the quays, in which is situated the town mansion of the Captain-general or Governor of the island. Though not large, it is very pretty and effective, being planted with trees, paved in the centre and towards the outside with broad flags, and surrounded with benches. Nearly every evening, and especially on Sunday evenings and holidays, and other days of special commemoration, there is a large concourse of the inhabitants assembled here, to listen to the magnificent music which is poured forth by the military bands, which attend for the purpose in front of the Captain-general's house. During my stay, there happened the anniversary of the birthday of the Queen-mother of Spain, and the public gaieties and rejoicings were on a scale of commemorative splendour proportionate to the importance of the event, or the Spaniards' notion of it. I therefore not only saw the Plaza de Armas, and also the Paseo Isabella Secunda, and other places of public resort, in their usual, but likewise in their holiday attire; and the scene was certainly a very gay and brilliant one. In the forenoon there was a levee at the

house of the Captain-general, in which uniforms of scarlet, green, purple, and nearly every shade of colour, enriched with as much gold and silver as could be stuck upon them, contended for the mastery. I confess, however, that it struck me that the uniforms were much more gorgeous than tasteful, and that some of the grandees who figured in them looked much more like "flunkies" than senators or general officers. Add to this the unusual number of men of small stature, and that (as not unfrequently happens) the most insignificant in point of size were generally the most bedizenned with uniform and orders, and the reader will see that the drawing-room of the Governor-general of Cuba did not impress me with very high notions either of Spanish stature or Spanish taste. But the remark only applies to the lordly portion of Cuban creation. It were the grossest injustice to apply it to the ladies. Indeed, it is only the simple truth to say that I was wholly unprepared for the beautiful forms and noble countenances of the Cuban ladies. For dark eyes, liquid in their lustrous light, and those long eyelashes which give so soft a radiance to the glance of a fair *Italienne*, and for raven tresses, I was somewhat prepared; but certainly not for the full forms and handsome countenances these Creole ladies of Cuba so generally display. No doubt they want that freshness of complexion to be found in more northern climes; but they have full figures, well-developed busts, noble countenances, and eyes of the most brilliant softness. Indeed there is

about the ladies of Cuba an appearance of health which is somewhat at variance with the ascertained fact that they seldom, if ever, take any amount or degree of exercise, farther than a drive to the Paseo or to the shops and stores, or cafés, (where they are served, sitting in their carriages,) in the indispensable volante. Yet, with all this indolence—with us so certain an inducer of bad health—the ladies of Cuba have a breadth of shoulder and a fulness of bust which rival even those of the Norman beauty of England, and which the traveller will look for in vain among the fairy forms to be seen in the United States of America. In part explanation of this acknowledged fact, I have heard or read a reference made to the open nature of the houses in Havanna, and to the fact that thus the inhabitants may be said to live almost always in the open air—or at least to have always a free circulation of air around them; and I am satisfied there is much in this. Indeed, were it not for this, living in Havanna would scarcely be endurable. It would be rendered insupportable by the combined influence of the heat and of the odours. The streets are narrow, particularly those within the walls. Nor is the town in any degree entitled to a character for cleanliness; so that the olfactory nerves are often, as you go along the streets, offended with odours of the most villanous character, of which the smell of garlic seems always to form a part. When to this you add the occasional smells of tobacco, dried fish, rancid butter, damp bales, and the

exhalations from the moist, and not particularly clean, skins of the negro slaves, and remember that the whole is to be encountered with the thermometer standing, in the shade, at or about 90 or 100° of Fahrenheit, it will be admitted that a free circulation of air is most desirable. And admirably are the Havanna houses adapted for receiving that free circulation. The ceilings are in general extremely lofty. The windows are also wide, and so high that they extend from the ceiling to the floor; and, being unglazed, and only closed by blinds which do not exclude the air, there is at all times a free circulation, without which the climate would be absolutely insupportable. These blinds are but seldom drawn, even in the evening; and it has a singular effect to a European or American eye, to observe that, as you walk along the narrow *trottoirs* of the narrow streets, you occasionally brush clothes with the handsomely dressed signoras and signores, as they lounge at their evening parties, or family reunions, leaning against the iron bars which run from the top to the bottom of their lofty windows, dividing them from the street. The same circumstance—the openness of the windows, and the unfrequency of drawn blinds—enables, nay almost compels the passenger, as he walks along the street, to see the domestic operations and attitudes of the persons (generally the smaller class of shop and storekeepers) who occupy the houses fronting the narrower streets. But it is only fair to add that the privilege is one which is seldom abused, and one an

abuse of which would meet with an immediate and indignant check, by the offender being at once given into charge for punishment. During the time I was in Cuba, I only saw one tipsy man, and he was either an Englishman or an American; and on no occasion did I hear or see any quarrel on the street, arising from the ladies or other persons at the windows being addressed by the passers-by who rubbed clothes with them, or from any other cause.

It is also a simple act of justice to pay a tribute to the manner—the excellent, tasteful, and cleanly manner—in which both the ladies and the gentlemen of Havanna dress themselves. In the manner in which they dress their children, they not unfrequently carry this to a ludicrous length. At the Tacon theatre, and when driving on the Paseo, I have oftentimes seen a couple, composed evidently of father and son, the latter an urchin of four, five, or six years of age, and both dressed precisely alike, even to the jewelled cane, the gold watch, and the diamond ring. This surely is “ridiculous excess.” But, as a general rule, the Cubans dress tastefully and well, both men and women. It seemed to me that the male part of the community had a great preference for black coats, with white waistcoats and continuations; and, if the coat be light in texture, this is a dress most admirably adapted for the climate. These Cuban gentlemen do also, as it appeared to me, endeavour to eschew hair on the sides of the cheek, and to promote its production on every other part of

the face—a habit, I certainly think, filthy and unbecoming: but *de gustibus nil est disputandum*. The English traveller in these regions will find no persons who excel his own countrymen in extraordinary attempts at the growth of hair on the human face divine.

The ladies, save when occasions of religious ceremony or family observance compel the use of black, do unquestionably prefer white dresses—that most effective of all dress for the young and fair, a white muslin dress. In these flowing muslins, and without bonnets or other head-dress, to hide the magnificent hair which nature has given them, they come out to the afternoon drive in the Paseo, or to the evening lounge on the Plaza de Armas; and, gracefully reclining, in easy indolence, in their volantes, which form a cordon around the whole square, they converse or flirt with their numerous beaux during the intervals between the music—the ample folds of their dresses flowing over on each side of the steps of the carriage, but clear of contamination from the mud on the wheels, from the circumstance of the latter being placed so far back, in the manner before explained, when describing the vehicle. In short, I recollect of no instance in which I have seen anything of the kind more beautiful than a well-appointed Cuba volante, with two or three fair Creole ladies of Cuba sitting on it, their heads uncovered, and their white dresses flowing in graceful folds around them. Inside the volantes at the Plaza de Armas, there are rows of



forms and chairs placed for those who prefer to sit ; and within the whole is a place for promenading, the bands (for there are generally two, if not three) being stationed around the statue in the centre. The square is lit with gas when occasion requires ; and a more agreeable place for an evening promenade it were difficult to imagine.

The Paseo Isabel, which lies between the walls of Havanna and the streets of the new town, is another place of public resort, being the chief place to which the citizens repair with their volantes, to drive up and down on festival occasions—enjoying, at the same time, the luxury of seeing and of being seen, and the exquisite music discoursed by the military bands provided by the Government for the amusement of the people. I witnessed the scene on the occasion before mentioned—namely, on the anniversary of the birthday of the Queen-mother Christina—as well as at other times ; and a very gay, cheerful scene it is. If I were to venture a conjecture as to the number of volantes I saw, at one time, driving up and down the Paseo, I fear I would scarcely be credited. It seemed as if all Havanna had turned out in honour of the occasion.

The hour of drive in the Paseo is generally early in the afternoon, about five o'clock ; that of the promenade, in the Plaza de Armas, considerably later—about eight o'clock. Indeed, it seemed to me that the fair Cubans just loitered at the one till it was time to go to the other ; and many a voluptuous form, whom I had seen sitting in her volante as it drove along the Paseo, did

I afterwards recognise reclining, with easy elegance, in the same vehicle at the Plaza.

On leaving the Plaza de Armas, the places of resort are the Theatre Tacon, (in which there is, generally, an operatic company of considerable merit,) when it is open ; or the splendid cafés, of which there are, at least, two very large ones in the immediate vicinity of the Plaza. I can only speak from personal experience of one of these cafés—that called the Dominica—than which there is not a better appointed establishment of the kind in any part of the world. Indeed, all the English and Americans, as well as Cubans, I met with in Havanna, were loud in their praises of the Dominica. It was made by us our constant place of meeting and of call, whether we intended to patronise its tempting delicacies or not ; and it is simply an act of justice to record the fact, that nothing could exceed the attention and civility we received, whatever was the nature or purpose of the call. It is a very large establishment, capable of containing some hundreds of visitors at the same time. In the centre of it there is a large, open, paved court, with a fountain in the middle, in which court the visitors are also accommodated, being protected by a sail overhead, which can be drawn back or across, so as to form a roof, as occasion may require or render expedient.

To describe the variety of articles falling under the generic names “ preserves ” or “ confectionaries,” to be seen and tasted at the Dominica, were a tedious task to any one—an impossible one to such as have had their

culinary education somewhat neglected, as has been my lot—but the flavour of some of them linger on my palate still. The spirited proprietor carries on a very large foreign as well as home trade; and I was not at all surprised when I was informed of the fact, and saw the statement verified, by witnessing the huge boxes of pine-apple jelly, guava jelly, preserved fruits of every description, and liquors of every possible name and colour, which came from “La Dominica” to the steam-ship *Severn*—Captain Vincent commander—to be conveyed to different parts of the world, to minister to the gratification of the rising generation and others. In short, the proprietor of the Dominica has a large home and foreign business; and he deserves to have it, were it only for his civility to strangers, and for the gallantry with which his numerous helps attend to the commands of the fair signorittas as they stop for refreshment of some kind, without alighting from the volante, after they leave the Plaza de Armas.

The Tacon theatre mentioned above is a very splendid building, very spacious—being indeed one of the largest in the world. When I first went to Havanna, it was occupied as a place for the exhibition of feats of legerdemain and “digital dexterity,” by a gentleman rejoicing in the somewhat mixed name of Signor M’Allister, and his lady, who were delighting the Cubans with their magical performances. The surname smacked strongly of Scotland; and the answer I received, on inquiring at a Scotch gentle-

man, resident in the island, was, that he knew Mr M<sup>c</sup>Allister, and that he was a native of the land of mountain and of flood, having been born in the manufacturing village of Kirkintilloch, in the west of Scotland.

Having no great taste for such exhibitions, and having already seen several in my time—the court-performing “Wizard of the North” inclusive—it was not my countryman, or his “*neuvá y variada funcion*,” that attracted me to the Cuban theatre; although it is but fair to add, that never had I before seen such performances more skilfully executed than they were *por los esposos M<sup>c</sup>Allister*, who contrived to keep a large, gay, and varied audience in a state of interested delight for a period, I should suppose—for I left ere it was finished—of about three hours.

My object, however, was to see the house, about the beauty of which I had previously heard much—and that much was certainly justified by the fact. It is indeed a superb, tasteful house, painted white, with gilded mouldings. There is a pit capable of containing fully a thousand people, each person being accommodated with a seat or stall separate from the rest, and these seats or stalls being numbered. Of the boxes there are three tiers or rows, and of the galleries there are two. The open formation of the boxes, with their movable jalousies behind, and, generally, the formation of the house, is not only beautiful and effective, but admirably adapted to promote coolness—

which is, of course, the main object in a climate where the thermometer is rarely below ninety in the shade.

I visited the Tacon Theatre also in the forenoon, to correct any too favourable ideas I might have formed from having seen it when lit up by the splendid gas-lights which illumine and adorn it, and graced by the numerous fairy forms, and brilliant or languishing eyes of the ladies who occupied the boxes. But daylight confirmed my opinion of its fine proportions; and, from having tried my own voice in it, and heard others speak in it, I would say, that it is as well adapted for speaking in as it is for seeing and for hearing. This theatre is chiefly used for operative purposes; and ere I left the island, Madame Anna Bishop, with Bocksa and Valtalli, had arrived, and were gratifying the Cubans with their musical powers.

The Cuba Beneficencia I did not inspect, and the only thing connected with the exterior of it was a scene which is to be seen in Cuba in front of almost every place which is at all of a public character—and that is, soldiers on guard. Soldiers, soldiers, in every direction. On the Paseo, at the promenade, guarding the theatre, at the cemetery, and even in front of the hospitals. The number of troops in Cuba must be very great for the size of the island. There were not, at the time in question, less than twelve thousand in the town of Havanna alone.

A little apart from the city, and after passing through that gate in the town wall which is nearest the sea, you come to the public cemetery of Havanna,

called the Campo Santo—a place of no beauty, but interesting as the spot which receives at last, and in rapid succession, the bodies of rich and poor in this town of bustling trade, after the lease of life held by each comes to an end. This graveyard is surrounded by a very thick wall, with an interior brick-work, in which are niches or openings in tiers, one above another, in numerous succession. These niches or recesses are deep, and look like large pigeon-holes; and they form the tombs of the richer inhabitants of Havanna, the coffin being thrust into the niche, and the end built up or covered by a tablet, to remain so till it is opened for the next member of the family for whom death calls. In the yard within the walls, the poor are thrust, generally without coffins, into shallow graves—the process of decomposition being hastened by the use of quick-lime. If the visit is paid in the cool of the evening, the period of the day at which funerals usually take place, the visitor will have an opportunity of judging for himself of the manner in which funerals are conducted in Cuba, as scarcely an evening passes without numerous interments taking place. There is no funeral service at the grave, and oftentimes the corpse is brought for burial dressed in the clothes of every-day life. It was, on the whole, a sickening sight; and the vicinity of a lunatic establishment, at the windows of which some of the inmates were seen, helped to add to its disheartening effect.

It were to omit one of the pleasantest of Cuban reminiscences, not to mention the Baños Públicos, or

public bathing-houses, to be found in and about Havanna. There are numerous establishments in the town, where hot and cold fresh-water baths may be had at a cost of from a quarter of a dollar to half a dollar; and it is only in a climate like Cuba that the luxury of such establishments is fully felt. But the baths worthy of special mention are the sea-baths along the coast, several of which you pass on the way to the Campo Santo. The coast of Cuba is formed or composed of a kind of honey-comb rock, and this is cut or hollowed out into baths, in lengths of about twenty feet square, or thereby, and of a depth varying from three to six, or even eight feet—the outer wall, between the bath and the sea, being perforated with holes, which admit the free flow of the water in and out, while they do not permit of the ingress of anything that can injure or annoy. In none of the other islands of the West Indian Archipelago are there sea-baths at all to compare with those of Havanna; and they only who have felt the luxury of a bath in sea water in the tropics, and know the danger of swimming in the open sea among these islands, can appreciate fully the advantage the Cubans enjoy in having such places for performing their ablutions. There are, of course, separate baths for the females; and there are larger baths into which several persons may go, while the visitor, who prefers it, can have one entirely to himself or herself. These baths are covered in by a wooden erection, and the charge for the bath and the use of towels is generally a

peséta for the bath, and a real for the towels—about thirty cents, or 1s. 3d.

The Valla de Gallos, or public cockpits of Havanna, cannot be excluded from its characteristics and sights. They are situated in a large enclosure outside the walls, and are composed of two amphitheatres, having benches round the sides, and a roof overhead, with a circular area in the middle. These places are generally crowded, and the shouting of “Mata, mata,” (kill, kill,) and other sounds, baffles description; while the quantity of money that changes hands, as each combat is brought to a conclusion by the one or other of the combatants in this inhuman and brutalising sport being killed or disabled, shows how deeply the practice and spirit of gambling generally have worked themselves into the national character. A cockpit, and a game at Monté, (which is a chance game at cards,) can, I believe, easily be seen in any part of Cuba, as well as in most parts either of Spain or of any of her colonies.

The stranger in Havanna is at once struck with the want of trees, particularly in the promenades. This, in a tropical climate, is unquestionably a great want. The trees in the Paseo are young, scarcely more than shrubs; and throughout the whole town and suburbs there is the same want of shade from trees—a fact which is mainly to be attributed to the effects of a hurricane which visited the island in 1844, and produced much suffering and distress.

Within the walls, the streets of Havanna are both



narrow and crooked—so narrow, that in some streets two Volantes can scarce pass each other. Outside the walls they are wider; and both “intra” and “extra muros” the buildings are large, having in general a courtyard in the centre, which is oftentimes paved with marble, around which courtyard are the entrances to the rooms, and the whole has altogether a very Moorish aspect. In the hotels or boarding-houses, such as Madame d’Alhny’s or Miss Chambers’s—both of which are excellent, well-conducted establishments, where everything may be had at public tables at a charge of about two dollars per day—the public rooms are good, and (which is the thing chiefly wanted in such a climate) airy and spacious, as well as tolerably well furnished. But the bedrooms are generally the worst rooms in the house; and altogether there is a great want of those domestic conveniences comprehended under the truly English term “comfort.” In some of the private houses I had the pleasure of visiting, the rooms—the public ones especially—are very handsome; and I enjoyed the hospitalities of one friend, who, while his public rooms were good, had judiciously turned the two best rooms of his mansion into his own bedroom, and a nursery for his children: but he was an Englishman, at least a Scotchman. Rents in Havanna are very high, and altogether it is a very dear place to live in. The coins in general use are Spanish and Mexican dollars, half and quarter dollars, pesétas, or twenty-cent pieces, reales de plata, about the eighth of a dollar, and doubloons, of which there are two kinds—

the one doubloon being Mexican, Columbian, or of some other South American state, and being of the value of about £3, 6s. 8d., and a legal tender for sixteen dollars; and the other, the old Spanish doubloon, or onza d'oro, value about £3, 10s. 10d., and a legal tender for seventeen silver dollars. Of the silver dollars, the Spanish pillar dollar is preferred.

When on the subject of coins, I would strongly recommend the traveller in these parts, before starting on his voyage, or as soon thereafter as possible, to possess himself of a book or pamphlet containing drawings of most coins in use, with a statement of their relative worth and value. Such pamphlets are published in America, by Taylor and others. I am not aware whether there are any works of a similar nature published in England; but, at all events, the American publication can easily be procured in this country, from any bookseller who deals in Transatlantic publications. These pamphlets are issued in the States once a-month, and are *there* of especial use, as they contain descriptions of the numerous notes (paper money) of inferior value, or *of no value at all*, which are there in constant circulation, and with which the designing and dishonest often cheat the unwary traveller. They also give drawings and descriptions of most coins, with the relative value of each in cents.

Before leaving Cuba, I did my utmost to get as accurate information as possible, as to the general condition of the slave population; but the details differed so much, that it was next to impossible to lay

down any statement of general application. The system is so very a despotism, and masters differ so widely, that what is true of one is untrue of another, and the shades of difference in the treatment of their slaves are just as numerous as the men. A few particulars, however, I ascertained as facts beyond dispute.

In the first place, the domestic slaves, those employed in the performance of menial offices in the families of their owners, are in general very well treated. Nor are they indiscriminately selected from the general body. The office is as it were hereditary; the children, if there are any, being brought up to the performance of domestic work as the parents die. It is plain that ties will thus be formed between the master and mistress, and their families, and their domestic servants, which will go far to soften the hardships of slavery, and to secure the comparative good treatment of the slaves. So it is in Cuba. The best-informed parties in Havanna assured me, and my own observation led me to the same conclusion, that, on the whole, the household slaves were a favoured race compared with their fellows in the field, and that instances in which *domestics* were ill treated were the exceptions, and not the rule.

Among the slaves, and particularly among the domestic slaves, it occasionally happens that a slave works out his or her freedom, under the operation of a law known as giving rise to what is called the *Cuartado* system. By this system a slave can purchase his freedom if so inclined. If he has been purchased by

his master, the price so paid is held also as the price which he must pay for his liberation ; while, if he has been born in slavery to his master, he is entitled by law to have a price put upon himself by valuation, at which price he has the right to redeem himself from bondage. After this valuation, on paying one-sixth of the price, the slave becomes master of his own time, becomes free, as it were, for one day in the week ; another sixth, two days, and so on ; so that the capacity for acquiring freedom, as well as the desire so to do—like Virgil's impersonation of fame—*vires acquirit eundo*. If I remember aright, some such plan was once proposed by the British statesman Canning, for the gradual emancipation of the slaves in the British colonial possessions. When once adventured on, and to some length successfully prosecuted, the path to freedom by the Cuartado system is not a difficult one. But to commence,—*hic labor hoc opus est* : few even of the strongest and best-behaved can find the means of beginning to work out their liberty, and hence it is that there are but few Cuartados to be found in Cuba. But there are a few, and it is generally conceded—indeed, it may be readily supposed—that persons who have so adventured on a course of well-doing for the purchase of the dearest earthly right, will make the best and most faithful domestic servants, and are accordingly generally selected for that purpose.

The field-labourers are however, as a body, in a very different situation. As a general rule, their labour is very severe, and their treatment very harsh

—during the process of sugar-making, especially so. When once the grinding or pressing the cane—the first step in sugar-making—is begun, it proceeds day and night, with the exception of Sundays and other holidays, (and oftentimes without even these exceptions,) till the whole is completed. The slaves work in gangs, and for six hours or so at a time—being kept closely at their work by the fear of the lash, and by its frequent application. In some estates there are no women—in others there are very few; and the men are, during the hours devoted to sleep, penned up in barracoons like so many cattle. No doubt the treatment varies on different estates. On some it is much more humane than on others, but as a general rule it is the very reverse of humane; and I could not, although I diligently inquired, hear of any estate on which the number of labourers was kept up by births on the estate itself. Indeed, the idea of making the slave population supply itself is the last thing that seems to enter a Cuban's mind; and it will be so so long as, by violating the contract made with, and paid for by England in 1817, and by encouraging the disgusting slave trade, he can buy *much* cheaper than he can breed. To *breed* slaves is bad enough, but it is an evil unquestionably *second* to the stealing and selling of them; and thus it is, it should be remembered, that to end slavery we must begin at the beginning: we must first put an end to the slave traffic. That is unquestionably the natural way.

Indeed, as to the condition and treatment of agricultural slaves in the island of Cuba, these two well-ascertained facts speak volumes, and render further inquiry almost unnecessary. In the first place, the Negro population is far, very far from supporting itself. The number of victims annually robbed from Africa and taken as slaves to Cuba, Porto Rico, and Brazil, are estimated at seventy-eight thousand. Of these the Spanish colonies get one-half. But whatever number may be landed at Porto Rico in the first instance, few are allowed to remain there, for the reason already pointed out when writing of the labouring population of that productive island. It is therefore within the truth to estimate the numbers annually taken to Cuba at thirty thousand; and that this amount of importation is required to make good the ravages by death, is proved by the fact, that whenever, through the vigilance of British cruisers or otherwise, there has been a failure in the number imported, the price has immediately and rapidly risen. It is a fact well known and universally admitted in Havanna, that when, in the spring or summer of 1847, intelligence reached Cuba that the British Government had actually passed the Sugar Duties Bill of 1846, (admitting slave-grown sugar into our markets,) the price of slaves immediately rose greatly; and such was the demand occasioned by the increase of sugar cultivation in the island, that slaves formerly considered so old, infirm, and superannuated, as to be exempted from working were again put to work; and

some were drafted from the lighter work of the caffe-tal, or coffee plantations, on to the heavier labour of the sugar estates : and these consequences arose solely from the fact that the slavers were unable to supply the demand with sufficient rapidity, being prevented by the vigilance of the British and French cruising squadrons.

In the second place, it is now but too well known that the average life of a slave, after he reaches Cuba, does not exceed seven or eight years. This acknowledged fact requires no comment. It contains in itself at once the evidence and the explanation of the inhuman treatment which these unfortunates receive at the hands of their oppressors.

There are surely none, who can appreciate the horrors of such a state of things, who would not gladly aid in and towards their suppression. That the issue is rapidly approaching seems very evident ; but how it is to be brought about is not so plain. If to any I may seem to contemplate too liberally the possibility of the American Republic acquiring Cuba by purchase or otherwise, it is possible that my feelings thereto are somewhat influenced by the conviction that such acquisition of the isle of Cuba would accelerate, instead of (as some think) retarding the glorious day of the abolition, not only of the slave trade, but of slavery, even in the American Union itself. Apart however from this, and even should Great Britain and France be left alone, as they may be said to have hitherto been, in their holy crusade against the system

of slavery ; and apart even from the vexed question of whether the African squadron is either a judicious or an efficient weapon for slave trade suppression, England and France have other, more powerful, and more universally applicable means at their command, for the accomplishment of their beneficent designs towards the swarthy sons of Africa. It will form part of the object of the next Chapter to explain what these means are, and how they should be employed.



## CHAPTER VIII.

“Great was the boon, my country, when you gave  
To man his birthright, freedom to the slave.”

### THE BRITISH WEST INDIAN COLONIES—THEIR CLAIMS—POSITION AND PROSPECTS.

THE concluding remarks of the last Chapter have brought me to the date at which I left the West Indian Archipelago — never, in all probability, to return thereto. Thereafter crossing the Gulf of Mexico from Havanna to Mobile, I found myself for the first time, and with highly raised hopes, on the great continent of America.

But, before finally leaving the subject of the British colonial possessions in the West Indies, I am irresistibly impelled, nay, I feel it almost a duty, to record, in as few words as I can, the views and impressions, formed upon the scene, as to the claims, position, and future prospects of these noble colonies of England. No doubt the subject is nearly threadbare. So much has been said and written upon it already, that it were perhaps scarcely to be hoped that any new fact should be here stated, any new view elicited, or

the general subject discussed with greater clearness and force of argument than have been already brought to bear upon it by other and by abler writers. Still I am satisfied that much ignorance and misconception yet prevails, even regarding the facts on which the question at issue between England and her West India colonies depends; and perchance these remarks upon it may fall into hands which have not yet had access to other more extended and elaborate treatises or statements, and may induce some, who would not otherwise have done so, to investigate the matter for themselves. At all events, I have resolved to put in writing my views of the present unfortunate, depressed state and condition of West Indian affairs, and of the remedies that might be applied to them; and if the subject seems too old, or too irksome, for the perusal of any who have gone with me thus far, I can only respectfully suggest that they turn over a few leaves, and join me at the commencement of the next Volume.

The pages on which are inscribed the part that England has acted in the suppression of slavery, and in the emancipation of the slave, are unquestionably among the brightest pages of her national history. They shed a halo round the name of England which is imperishable, and beyond the reach of national mutation. That

“Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs  
Receive our air, that moment they are free,”

had become credited, almost as an axiom, even before

the famous decision of Lord Mansfield, pronounced in the case of the slave Somerset, in June 1772. Indeed—and this is a fact which is not generally known—the same point as that tried and decided in Somerset's case, had been brought solemnly before, and fully discussed in, the supreme court of Scotland, no less than fifteen years previously; and it is nothing less than certain, that a judgment similar in effect to that pronounced by Lord Mansfield would then have been given in Scotland, had the final decision of the case not been prevented by the unfortunate death of the negro, pending the discussion. Under date 4th July 1757, the following case is reported in the records of the Court of Session. "*Hearing in presence—Robert Sheddan against a Negro.* A Negro who had been bought in Virginia, and brought to Britain to be taught a trade, and who had been baptised in Britain, having claimed his liberty against his master, Robert Sheddan, who had put him on board a ship to carry him back to Virginia; the Lords *appointed counsel for the Negro*, and ordered memorials, and afterwards a hearing in presence, upon the respective claims of *liberty* and *servitude*, by the master and the negro. But, during the hearing in presence, the negro died — so the point was not decided."

But, although the question had thus been previously mooted in Scotland, the glory yet remains to the great Mansfield, of having pronounced the decision which first promulgated the noble truth that England

and slavery are incompatible terms—a decision which may be said to have roused into active exertion, in 1772, that spirit which animated a succession of men, such as Clarkson, Wilberforce, Brougham, Jeffrey, and Mackintosh, and of which the Emancipation Act of 1834 was only one of the later results. The circumstances of Somerset's case have been often recorded; but they deserve to be borne in mind, and they form a fitting introduction to the consideration of what Great Britain has yet to do, if she would do justice to *all* parties in this great cause.

Somerset the slave had, after his arrival in England, become incapacitated for working. It was said that this was through the cruel treatment of his master; but it seems equally probable that it was through disease. His condition was made known to Mr William Sharpe, then a surgeon in London, by whose philanthropic and skilful services the poor slave was healed. His master finding that he was so, again claimed his services as a slave; but, the circumstance coming to the ears of Granville Sharpe, (the brother of the surgeon who had healed the man,) who had previously buckled on his mental armour in this great struggle for the rights of man, he brought the case before Lord Mansfield, who, on 22d June 1772, pronounced the memorable judgment, which is in these terms:—

“Immemorial usage preserves the memory of positive law, long after the traces of the occasion, reason, authority, or time of its introduction are lost; and,

in a case so odious as the condition of slaves, must be taken strictly. Tracing the subject of natural principles, the claim of slavery never can be supported. The power claimed by this return never was in use here. We cannot say the cause set forth by this return is allowed or approved of by the laws of this kingdom ; and therefore the man must be discharged.”

The spirit of opposition to slavery as a system, being thus awakened and encouraged—public attention being directed to the matter—the cause proceeded and prevailed, gathering strength as it advanced, until, after repeated defeats, Mr Wilberforce, on the 25th of March 1807, carried his bill which pronounced the slave trade abolished for ever, and the stain it had inflicted wiped off from the national escutcheon of England. Nor should the fact be overlooked, when noticing the subject, that it was in the very same year that America abolished the slave traffic, in so far as she was concerned, declaring it to be illegal for her subjects to carry it on—Denmark having preceded both England and America in this sacred cause.

But, the slave trade abolished, another evil only second to it still remained. Slavery still existed in the British colonial possessions. The supply from without was cut off, and thereby, no doubt, a great boon was conferred on those slaves already within—inasmuch as even the most inhuman master had now an inducement to treat his slaves with a kindness he had never exhibited to them before—the same inducement that the

possessor of a horse has to treat him well, if he does not know how to replace him should he be lost. But the nation was not satisfied. The excitement and agitation proceeded, led on by Wilberforce and other well-known names, and, it cannot be denied, aided not a little by the well-authenticated cases of cruelty perpetrated on slaves by individual masters in the West Indies,\* until, in the year 1833, the Emancipation Act—which put an end, not merely to the traffic in slaves, but to slavery itself, throughout the dominions of Great Britain—passed the British Parliament. It is a coincidence, in connexion with the passing of this important statute, which is worthy of being recorded whenever mention of the subject is made, that, on the very night in which the House of Commons agreed to, and passed, the emancipating clause of the bill, the death of Wilberforce took place. It seemed almost as if the spirit of this great and good man had lingered in its tenement of clay, until it should be privileged to see the triumph of that cause to which his life had been devoted, and had then been itself emancipated from the sufferings of the flesh.

Before and at the time the Emancipation Bill was passed, the country was literally inundated with treatises and pamphlets, on both sides of the question ;

\* It were foreign to the object of this sketch to dwell on details; but the reader disposed to doubt this, or desirous of farther information, may consult the *Edinburgh Review*, and in particular the details connected with the trial and conviction of Hodge (one of the council of the Virgin Islands) for the murder of his slave in 1811; and the trial of Huggins, for excessive cruelty to his slaves, &c.

and there are some who even now affirm, that the bill was carried more by clamour, than in consequence of a general perception of the wisdom, justice, and prudence of the measure. Be this, however, as it may, there are few or none who now refuse to admit that the time had come when the abolition of slavery could not much longer be refused; and, throughout the length and breadth of the West Indies, never did I hear even the most complaining, indignant, or ruined planter declare either the possibility or the wisdom of a return to the enslaved state.

But let us consider, in a few sentences, the condition in which the passing of the Emancipation Act of 1833 placed the British colonist in the West Indies. If, to the date of that act, slavery had been a legalised thing in the British West Indies, the sin was not simply a colonial, it was a national one. England not merely permitted, but compelled the possessors of colonial estates to work their estates by means of slave labour. They had, indeed, no other labour to work them with—but *that* is not all. In most of the colonies, there was a law which required the maintenance of a certain proportion between the extent of the estate and the number of the slaves. The West Indian proprietor must either keep slaves or give up his property. Let this not be forgotten. But England, in 1833, said, This shall cease; in future, you (the colonist) must work your estates by free labourers: and in so doing, she said that which was as consistent with wisdom, as it certainly was with

justice and mercy. But the colonist replied, I cannot work my estate as cheaply by means of free men as by means of slaves. Now, what was the answer to this? *The fact was denied*; but, at the same time, it so far prevailed that compensation was given. Twenty millions sterling were agreed to be given; and it is certainly this twenty millions that blinds most persons in Great Britain so far as to prevent them from taking even a fair view of the present claims and position of the West Indian planter. Twenty millions were voted, and it was a handsome sum. There is no wish to deny that it was so; and I certainly am not one of those who would disparage this munificent act on England's part—an act which places her conduct in bright relief against the conduct of other countries, which have either refused their colonists compensation altogether, or have given a mere pittance in seeming compliance with the claim. But truth should be heard. What was this compensation for? Why was it fixed at twenty millions? It was given in consideration of the additional expense to be entailed on the planter from being compelled to hire labourers to work his fields and manufactories, instead of cultivating the one and carrying on the other by means of slaves—in consideration, in short, of the mother country having tied him up to one mode of culture, while he previously had an option of two. And it was fixed at twenty millions sterling, not because it was for a moment supposed that *that* sum would fairly represent the value of the slaves to be



liberated, much less of the estates and works on and in which they were employed—but because it was, at the time, thought, that the injury would only be a temporary one, and that, as *the planters would all be on the same footing*, the result, in a few years, would be to make the profit from working sugar, coffee, and cotton estates, by free labour, as great as it had been during the time when Britain countenanced slavery. The soundness of this view may be maintained from the terms of the Emancipation Act itself. In the rubric these words occur, “For compensating the persons hitherto entitled to the *services* of such slaves.” In the preamble, it is said that a reasonable compensation should be given “to the persons hitherto entitled to the services of the slaves, for the loss which they *may* incur by being deprived of *such* services.” And by section twenty-fourth, the twenty millions are granted “towards compensating the persons hitherto entitled to the services of the slaves to be manumitted.” Indeed, the statistics of the matter prove that this was the principle of the calculation. The value of the whole slaves in the British West Indian colonies was, by the Government commissioners, estimated and taken to be forty-three millions sterling; while the value of the estates, works, and machinery in and on which they were employed, was nearly twice that sum—making a formidable total of nearly one hundred and twenty-nine millions sterling. It is therefore out of the question to talk of the twenty millions as being

voted or intended to be given as representing anything more than the amount of supposed temporary loss the planter might sustain through the change in the condition of the labourer, and the consequent change in the nature of the relationship subsisting between that labourer and himself. Still the sum was a handsome one; and, if even the disappointed West Indian will fairly face the subject, he must admit that, *at the time*, and with the information which existed at the time, (whereby a glimpse into the probable consequences might have been obtained,) it was a munificent act of national justice, or at least intended to be so. *Indeed, had means been adopted for gradually procuring a sufficiency of free labourers—and had the measure of emancipation been left to itself, and to work out only its own effects, unaided and uninjured by subsequent legislation of a different and of a backward tendency—the amount given would have been found to have been a reasonable, if not a full, compensation.* In short, the transaction was this—and no reasonable man, either on the one side or the other, will deny that it was so: Britain said to her colonists,—“We have both been to blame—I in permitting, and even in legalising slavery in my possessions; you, in taking advantage of that permission, to engage and continue in a traffic and trade which violates one of the first rights and principles of humanity. But a change of system is an experiment, although a just and a necessary one, and it will

probably, if not certainly, be attended at first with loss. Now you, the colonist, ought to bear most of that loss, inasmuch as you have been actually engaged in the trade, and you or your predecessors on the estates have reaped such profit as has been derived from this objectionable and sinful mode of working your estates. Looking therefore to the whole matter—*totâ re-perspectâ*—I will compound my share of the delinquency by giving you the handsome sum of twenty millions sterling, besides aiding you to get free labourers for your estates, and any further loss arising from the natural effects of the measure must be borne by yourselves.” Here then lies the whole question, and in my humble opinion here lies the strength and justice of the claims of the British colonist. For, be it observed, the Emancipation Act was not an isolated measure ; it formed part of a great whole. In 1807 Great Britain had abolished the traffic in slaves by her own subjects. In 1817, she had entered into a treaty with Spain for the abolition of the slave trade by the subjects of his Catholic Majesty, paying the latter £400,000 as the price of his assent. In 1826, she had entered into a similar treaty with the Emperor of Brazil, whereby the latter renewed, recognised, and adopted the treaties that had previously been entered into, and were then subsisting between Great Britain and Portugal, for the entire suppression of the slave trade. And now, in 1833, she declared her resolution to pay £20,000,000 to her own subjects, for the emancipation of the slaves in her own colonial posses-

sions. In all this, the spirit which animated the counsels of England, and impelled her to these successive acts, was an intense, and seemingly a growing, permanent dislike to slavery in every shape and form, and a resolution to discountenance it in every possible way, even though the doing so involved pecuniary sacrifice and considerable loss. Such were undoubtedly the circumstances under which the Emancipation Bill—a bill the preamble of which indicated, that it was intended to ameliorate the condition of the planter as well as of the slave—was carried. No one who remembers the excitement that prevailed in Great Britain, and the numerous public meetings held in almost every city, town, village, hamlet, and institution, in every part of the country, to strengthen the hands of the Emancipationists, will be disposed to deny that the facts were as I have stated them.

Now, such being the circumstances attending the passing of the emancipation statute, were or were not the West Indian planters entitled to regard it as part of their compensation or protection against loss, that they would never have, in the home market at least, to compete with produce grown and manufactured by slaves? I confess I think they were. I am aware that there are those who deny this, maintaining that, as no Government is entitled to bind its successor, so no party treating with a Government is entitled to rely on its successor following out the same line of policy. But this is surely a very latitudinarian view

of state morality. Suppose that the Government of the day had only paid one-fourth or one-half of the compensation-money, and that the Government that succeeded it, while it adhered to the statute as a law, yet refused to make payment of the remainder of the sum due,—would any one have attempted to justify such a course? And if not, what is the difference between refusing a part of the promised *money* compensation, and a part of the implied *protective* compensation? Moreover, whatever view the greatest advocate for the principle that one Government cannot bind a succeeding one, may take of this matter, he will not surely deny that it is a most extraordinary position of matters, when we see a Government professing to approve of the general policy of their predecessors in office, and yet going back from that same policy and acting in opposition to it in part. Nothing surely could be further from the thought of the most desponding West Indian planter than the idea that, while England voted so large a sum in 1833 towards putting an end to slavery in her own colonies, she would, in 1846, pass an act which would have the direct effect of encouraging and increasing slavery in the possessions of other countries. And yet that such was the tendency, and that such has been the effect of the act of 1846, I will immediately show by the most conclusive of all evidence.

Before, however, leaving the subject of the twenty millions, and although the circumstance does not enter into the general argument, it may, for the sake of

accuracy, and to prevent cavil, be proper to notice the fact, that, while the twenty millions were voted, the whole of that sum was not paid. The sum actually awarded was £18,669,401, 10s. 7d.; while, even of this last-mentioned sum, the West Indian colonists only received £16,461,000. These facts do not enter into the principle of my argument, although they tend to show still further that full compensation never was contemplated. But as there is a very general tendency to throw this twenty millions in the teeth of our West Indian friends, and many still believe that sum to have been actually paid, it is but right that the misconception should be removed by a statement of the truth. The argument, however, is independent of this fact. Who could have thought that England would tax herself to the extent of some £800,000 per annum to prevent her own colonists supplying her with cheap sugar by means of slave labour, and yet that, in a few years later, she would pass an act which admitted slave-grown sugar the produce of foreign possessions? That there was a distinct bargain or contract between the colonists and the mother country, to the effect that slave-grown sugar never was to be admitted into the markets of this country to compete on equal terms with British colonial free-grown sugar, and that the fact that they were to be protected against the competition of slaveholders was an argument used to make our colonists contented with the Emancipation Act, I am ready to prove—ready to prove it by a mass of testimony, and to the

satisfaction of the most incredulous jury that ever were impannelled in a jury-box. Nay, more, I am ready to show that British Ministers have again and again admitted that such was the fact; that Lord Stanley, when, by mistake, he had used the words "slave-grown" for "foreign-grown," when speaking of a differential duty between foreign and British colonial sugar, and when the mistake was noticed, replied by admitting the mistake, adding that every one must have seen that it was a mistake, inasmuch as no one could ever think that Britain would admit slave-grown sugar into her markets, after her costly sacrifice to prevent sugar being made in her own colonies by means of slave labour. And Lord Glenelg, at a later date, made a well-known statement to the effect that they who were so foolish as to believe that Parliament would break its faith with the planters of the West Indies, by admitting slave-grown sugar into equal competition with that produced by them, displayed, by so believing, an "inecapacity for conducting the ordinary affairs of life and business."

But apart from the question of contract, which is one of evidence, there is the natural, the necessary conclusion to be drawn—the conclusion which no one could avoid drawing—from the act itself. If at such cost England tied the hands of her own colonists as to the kind of labour by which they should make sugar, would any sane person have believed that she would buy her sugar from foreigners who made it in the very way she had so seriously and emphatically objected

to and protested against? The idea could not have been entertained for a moment.

*I maintain, then, that part of the compensation to be given the British colonist was, protection from competition with the slaveholder of Cuba, Porto Rico, and Brazil; and that the same principle of justice was violated by depriving him of this, as would have been violated in depriving him of a portion of the £20,000,000, which was the compensation in money.*

Another subject of complaint, on the part of the West Indian colonist, against the conduct of the mother country, has reference to the abolition of the apprenticeship system in 1838. It was, say they, our bargain that we should have our full share of the £20,000,000 in money, the home market for our free-grown sugar, and an apprenticeship of seven years. But the mother country broke the bargain as to the last, by putting an end to the apprenticeship three years before the legal term of its expiry. There is much truth in this complaint, and I know of individual cases of great hardship which occurred in connexion with it. In particular, I know of a gentleman of British Guiana who was thereby utterly and unexpectedly stripped of the great bulk of a very handsome fortune. But still, with better arguments at my disposal, I am not inclined to press this one. There is an answer to it, which, if it does not meet the complaint, at least complicates the case. The planters of Antigua, from causes peculiar to that metropolitan island, declined the apprenticeship; and this fact, combined with authenticated cases in which



the apprenticeship was abused, gave the Government of the country at least a plausible excuse for bringing the apprenticeship system to a summary termination.

Before leaving the subject of the price paid by England in token of her horror of slavery, and her resolution to put down production by means of slave labour, it is proper to refer to the annual cost of the squadron, and of the mixed commission, to prevent the slave trade from being carried on by the subjects of Spain and of Brazil. Enough has been said on this subject in a former part of this book; but the argument would not be complete were this part of the price paid by us, in the cause of humanity, to be kept out of view.

And now, to what end has all this anti-slavery policy been gone back upon, if not stultified, by the legislation of 1846 and subsequent thereto? That it has been so—that the act of 1846, altered, amended, and extended as it was by the act of 1848, has operated as a direct encouragement to slavery and to the slave trade, and inflicted a heavy blow upon our own free colonies, already nearly prostrated—is now conceded by almost every one who has visited the West Indies. But lest there should be any who would desire some proof on the subject, let me briefly record a few of the leading facts.

Of the value of the slave trade—of the permission and means to cultivate their estates by slave labour, to the inhabitants of the island of Cuba—some graphic idea may be obtained from reflecting on the fact stated

by Lord Castlereagh, when delivering, in the British House of Commons, his speech upon the bill for concluding with Spain the treaty of 1817 for the suppression of the slave trade, (by which treaty Great Britain covenanted to pay Spain £400,000 as the price of her assent.) His Lordship mentions a well-known fact—viz. that the merchants of Havanna had offered the Spanish Government many times the amount of the payment to have nothing to do with the treaty. “So far,” says Lord Castlereagh, “from our money being the only motive which Spain has for acceding to this treaty, the Spanish merchants at Havanna had offered five times the amount (two millions sterling,) for the privilege of continuing the slave trade!” It is a somewhat humbling commentary on this statement of Lord Castlereagh, and on our own capacity, as a nation, to trade, to know that, although our French neighbours call us a nation of shopkeepers, we have allowed ourselves to be so far overreached in this bargain, that Spain has got the money from both. The £400,000 she got in cash from lavish England; the £2,000,000 she has got from Cuba, chiefly by the tax of fifty dollars a-head on all slaves imported into it, in direct evasion of the foresaid slave treaty. As above mentioned, Cuba has been somewhere called the milch-cow of Spain; and well does she merit the appellation, yielding, as she does, not less than fifty millions of reals, or about half a million sterling, of direct annual revenue to the Spanish crown. That it is her slave trade, and her consequent ability to

cultivate her fields with slave labour, that enables her to yield this large amount from taxation, is abundantly well known to all who have made the subject their study. No doubt Cuba is favoured as a place of production by the great fertility of her soil, its adaptation for the growth of tobacco as well as of sugar, and also by many other circumstances; but the cheapness and other advantages of her slave labour, constitute undoubtedly the main reason why she is able so to undersell the British West Indian colonist.

That the effect of the Sugar Act of 1846 was to give an increased impetus to the slave trade, and to advance the prosperity of the slave-owner of Spain and Brazil, has often been shown. The statement has indeed been denied, and attention has, in the way of answer, been directed to the fact that, in 1846, before the act passed the British legislature, or at least before intelligence of its having passed could have reached Brazil, or the colonies of Spain, the slave trade was in active and increased operation. But this is a mere evasion of the argument. If the general rumour, that such an act was in preparation, and likely to be carried, was not sufficient to account for such activity by anticipation, as I think it was, there remains the well-known fact that, *after* the news of the act having passed reached Cuba, land in that island rose in value fully thirty per cent, and that, in the summer of 1847, the demand for slaves was greater than the slavers could supply. While, of the effect of the passing of the act on the trade in slaves, it is ascer-

tained that while in 1834 and 1835 the trade was nearly extinct, at least in Cuba, in 1846 the number of slaves imported was sixty-four thousand, and in 1847 sixty-three thousand.

It is no doubt true, that the diminished number of the slaves imported into Cuba in the years first above mentioned, (1834 and 1835,) was in some measure owing to the better faith kept, at that time, with the British Government by the Spanish authorities at Madrid, and their colonial representative, General Valdez, the then Captain-general of the island of Cuba. But still, the coincidence between the passing of the act of 1846 and the vast increase in the activity of the slave trade, coupled with the acknowledged improvement which, at the same time, developed itself in the sugar cultivation in this island, is pregnant with evidence of the most important character. It is a favourite argument with those who are disposed to defend the legislation which has, of late years, so injuriously affected the interests of the British West Indian planters, that their necessities will compel these gentlemen to more economical management, and to the adoption of modern improvements on cane cultivation and in sugar making. No doubt it is a truism that what a man has not, he cannot, of his own, spend, either in lavish management or otherwise. But without here going further into the general argument, or doing more than affirming that the British colonial planters have retrenched their expenses of management in every possible way, (pared them down to one

half of what they formerly were,) and also that they have been most liberal in their introduction of steam-engines, improved ploughs, and patent pans, *et hoc genus omne*, it may be here asked, whether this fact—that it was an increase in the demand, and in their profits, and not a falling off, that induced the planters of Cuba and of Porto Rico to improve their estates and sugar-works—does not practically militate against the above application of the theory of “necessity the mother of invention.”

But while such was the effect of the Sugar Duties Bill of 1846, and subsequent legislation of 1848, in enhancing the value of property in slaveholding and sugar-producing countries, and in increasing the activity of the slave trade, what has been their effects on the property of our own colonists in the West Indies? *That* is a matter of too great notoriety to justify or require lengthened statement or illustration. That the British West Indian colonists have been loudly complaining that they are ruined, is a fact so generally acknowledged, that the very loudness and frequency of the complaint has been made a reason for disregarding or undervaluing the grounds of it. That the West Indians are always grumbling is an observation often heard; and, no doubt, it is very true that they are so. But let any one who thinks that the extent and clamour of the complaint exceeds the magnitude of the distress which has called it forth, go to the West Indies, and judge for himself. Let him see with his own eyes the neglected and abandoned

estates—the uncultivated fields fast hurrying back into a state of nature, with all the speed of tropical luxuriance—the dismantled and silent machinery, the crumbling walls and deserted mansions, which are familiar sights in most of the British West Indian colonies. Let him then transport himself to the Spanish islands of Porto Rico and Cuba, and witness the life and activity which in these slave colonies prevail. Let him observe for himself the activity of the slavers—the improvements daily making in the cultivation of the fields, and in the processes carried on at the Ingenios or sugar-mills, and the general indescribable air of thriving and prosperity which surrounds the whole—and then let him come back to England and say, if he honestly can, that the British West Indian planters and proprietors are grumblers who complain without adequate cause.

Take Jamaica, the chief of the British islands, as a sample of the present condition of the British possessions in these seas, and *ex uno disce omnes*. It appears from the report of the committee of the House of Assembly in that island, appointed in 1847 to inquire into the cause and extent of the agricultural distress, that, of the 653 sugar estates in cultivation in Jamaica in the year 1834, (the year of emancipation) only 503 were cultivated in 1847, the remaining 150 estates, containing 168,032 acres of land, and employing upwards of 23,000 labourers, having been abandoned. This was in 1847: the downward tendency has certainly not been checked since then—matters are now a great

deal worse than they were in 1847 as regards the growth of the sugar-cane in Jamaica. Were we to take into view the coffee cultivation, the detail would be still more distressing. To the one fact above stated a thousand might be added, and all to the same disheartening effect; but the one fact will be easiest remembered, and it speaks volumes. The same observation as to the desertion of estates may be made with regard to all the other colonies, (Barbadoes alone excepted,) though not to the same extent or in the same proportion. In particular, British Guiana has suffered much from the abandonment of estates; and even while I write, I have before me (supplied me by the kindness of an intelligent friend in that colony) a list of fifty-six cotton, coffee, but chiefly sugar estates, deserted and abandoned in that productive and vast possession of late years, because wholly unprofitable. Indeed, this colony has suffered very severely and peculiarly from this cause; which arises no doubt from the great extent of territory embraced within its limits, and the paucity of the Negro population wherewith to carry on the cultivation.

No doubt, it has been said that much of the unprofitable results of sugar cultivation in the British West Indies is due to the profuse habits of the planters and proprietors, and the expensive system of agriculture and manufacture which they pursued; and it has been further said, that if they introduced machinery—steam-engines, and patent processes for preparing their sugar—they would so cheapen the production as at once to

put themselves in a position successfully to compete with the slaveholder. In so far as this charge of profuse management applies to sugar cultivation in the British West Indies, up to the passing of the Emancipation Act, or even for some time subsequent thereto, I might, as the result of my inquiries into the past condition of the colonies, be prepared to admit that there was some truth in it. Large profits will generally, and in all countries, lead to undue profusion both of living and of management; and it were idle to deny that, for many years, the profits from West Indian cultivation were great — were occasionally very great when compared with the remuneration from other sources of investment. So late even as the year 1846, the British colonists were getting in the markets of this country so high a price for their sugar as from £38 to £40 for a hogshead, weighing from seventeen or eighteen hundredweight; and, when it is kept in view that an acre of planted canes would produce two-and-a-half or three of such hogsheads; and that, excessively various as certainly are the estimates of the cost of sugar-making in the different colonies, or even on different estates in the same colony, few would estimate that expense in 1846 at more than from 18s. to 20s. a hundredweight, exclusive of freight and shipping charges, it cannot be denied, even by the colonist of most extravagant hopes, that the above-stated remuneration was at a very handsome rate. This extreme remuneration, however, was only for a short time, and in very peculiar circumstances.



But if the charge of profusion of living, expensiveness of management, or neglect of modern improvements, is intended to apply to the state of all or of any of the islands of Barbadoes, Antigua, St Kitt's, Nevis, Montserrat, or Jamaica, in the year 1849, I give it advisedly and deliberately the most emphatic, decided, and unqualified contradiction. As regards improvements in modes of cultivation, and the introduction of steam-engines and other machinery, the wonder only is, that, with such a backgoing trade, the West Indian planters have had the courage so to lay out their own funds or come under obligations to others. Hope, however, delights to brighten the prospects of the future ; and thus it is that the British West Indian planter goes on from year to year, struggling against his downward progress, and still hoping that something may yet turn up, to retrieve his ruined fortunes. But all do not struggle on. Many have given in, and many more can and will confirm the statement of a venerable friend of my own—a gentleman high in office in one of the islands above-mentioned—who, when showing me his own estate and sugar-works, assured me, that for above a quarter of a century they had yielded him nearly £2000 per annum ; and that now, despite all his efforts and improvements, (which were many,) he could scarcely manage to make the cultivation pay itself. Instances of this kind might be multiplied till the reader was tired, and even heart-sick, of such details. But what need of such ? Is it not notorious ?

Has it not been proved by the numerous failures that have taken place of late years, among our most extensive West Indian merchants? Are not the reports of almost all the governors of our colonial possessions filled with statements to the effect, that great depreciation of property has taken place in all and each of our West Indian colonies, and that great has been the distress consequent thereupon? These governors are, of course, all of them imbued, to some extent, with the Ministerial policy—at least it is reasonable to assume that they are so. At all events, whether they are so or not, their position almost necessitates their doing their utmost to carry out, with success, the Ministerial views and general policy. To embody the substance of the answer given by a talented Lieutenant-governor, in my own hearing, to an address which set forth, somewhat strongly, the ruined prospects and wasted fortunes of the colonists under his government,—“It must, or it ought to be, the object and the desire of every Governor or Lieutenant-governor, in the British West Indian islands, to disappoint and stultify, if he can, the prognostications of coming ruin with which the addresses he receives from time to time are continually charged.” Yet what say these Governors? Do not the reports of one and all of them confirm the above statement as to the deplorable state of distress to which the West Indian planters, in the British colonies, are now reduced? No doubt, (and the pages of any popular review since 1807 bear testimony to the fact,) we

have had a long continuance of complaint—nay, even of the cry of distress—from the West Indian proprietors. Since the abolition of the slave trade, we have never wanted the party watchword of “justice to the colonies.” But let us take care that we do not apply the philosophy of the fable of the boy and the wolf. Whatever may have been the amount of cause for complaint in days gone by, there is no doubt of the fact that now the British West Indian planters have been brought, *actually* and *literally*, to the verge of ruin; and I know not what that minister or statesman would deserve of this country, who would devise and carry out the measure that would lead to a restoration to a self-supporting or moderately prosperous condition. Often, while witnessing those evidences of decadence, which were so constantly obtruding themselves, did I wish that the vote could have been taken over again on the Sugar Duties Bill of 1846—each member of the House of Commons having, previous to voting, prepared himself by a trip through the West Indian islands. How different would have been the result! It is one thing to hear a matter discussed, particularly where there is only a half or a halting account given of its truth, but it is quite another thing to contemplate the facts of the case for one’s self; and thoroughly confident am I that, as “seeing is believing,” if our legislators saw the actual condition of our West Indian colonies, there would not be perseverance in the present system of legislation regarding them—or, if there was, some

counteracting and remedial measures at least would be devised and carried out.

In the colonial speech of the Premier of Great Britain, in the early part of the present session of Parliament, he distinctly and emphatically enunciated these positions,—“That England must retain her colonies; and that, while it was her duty as well as her interest so to do, she could not, consistently with the discharge of that duty or with her general policy, permit the native or imported races in any portion of these possessions to relapse into barbarism.” These are noble principles and professions. How they are all to be carried out as regards the West Indian colonies, consistently with perseveranee in free trade in sugar—slave as well as free grown—it passes my comprehension to know.

And where is all this downward tendency—this *facilis descensus*—to end? The object in view in passing the statutes of 1846 and 1848 was cheap sugar, and to carry out the principles of free trade in all their integrity and purity. It was and is said, (and truly said,) that sugar has become, not an article of luxury, but of necessity; and also that the consumption of it is increasing and will increase; and that it is unjust to tax the home consumer for the benefit of the colonial producer. And it is farther said, that, having adventured on a great experiment of free trade, it behoved the Government to carry it out in all its integrity; that it would not have done to have stopped short in its application, from a regard to any

one particular interest. Now these arguments may, to a certain extent, and as postulates, be conceded, without justifying the Ministerial policy in reference to the Sugar Duties Bill, and the subsequent legislation. I say, to a certain extent; for I do not mean to carry the admission the length of holding that cheap sugar is a matter of so much necessity as to justify the Government in promoting a reduction of its price in the home market, *fas aut nefas*—by unlawful as well as by lawful means—by breach of agreement as well as by more legitimate courses. Nor do I mean to admit that “free trade” is so desirable; or that, once adventured on, even as an experiment, it is so necessary to apply it to everything—to carry it out in all its integrity—for that is the clap-trap phrase—that everything must give way to such considerations, so as to leave no room for exceptional cases. But, short of carrying the admission this insane length, it may be conceded that sugar is an article, not merely of luxury to the rich, but of necessity to the poor, so that the Government are bound to do everything lawful to cheapen the sugar market; and further, that free trade, once adventured on, should not be abandoned till fairly tried, and until the results, being tested by experience, are found to be unjust and injurious. But mark the answers that remain, even after such admissions have been made. The measure of 1846 will not, in the end, tend to the cheapening of the sugar market in this country. It will necessarily lead to the withdrawal

of the British colonists from the competition—if not to the lapsing of the British West Indian islands into a state of Haytian semi-barbarism and unproductiveness—if they do not, in the hands of some other power, and when abandoned by England, return to an enslaved condition. Again, and with reference to the second branch of the argument under answer, the principles of free trade can never be properly applied, if the effect of the application be to place in one and the same category the man who is unfettered in his mode of working, and the man who is fettered. Not to weary my readers, I shall content myself with a very few simple remarks, in illustration of my meaning as regards both of these positions.

Sugar has fallen in price since the passing of the act in 1846. Every old lady knows the fact in the saving of her twopence or threepence a-week, and many, no doubt, rejoice in it. But why has it fallen? Because slave-grown sugar was then admitted to compete with and keep down the price of free-grown sugar. The first and immediate effect was to produce a great diminution in the importation of sugar from the British possessions in the West Indies — only 107,368 tons being thence brought in 1846, while 142,700 tons were imported in 1845.

No doubt, the statute retained an advantage in favour of free-grown sugar, in the shape of a gradually lessening protective duty—(although, it may be remarked in passing, that it will be found, on a

comparison of the scales of duty for the different kinds of sugar, that this advantage is not quite so great as at first sight appears.) But I have written to little purpose if I have not already shown that sugar produced by the labour of slaves can afford to give "free-grown sugar" even a greater advantage than the statute concedes to it. In a circular of Messrs Drake, Brothers, & Co., of Havanna, for the year 1844 (the writers being then, and I presume now, among the leading merchants of that town of gay life and unsavoury smells,) it is openly announced to the world, "That they (Messrs D. B. & Co.) had no expectation of the price of sugar (*i. e.* Cuban sugar) being improved, except by having the English market opened to the produce of the island;" adding, "if this were effected, at a rate even of *fifty per cent above the duty on English colonial sugar*, still they should obtain for their produce double the amount they can obtain at present." This is surely sufficiently cool and conclusive. These long-headed, enterprising Havannah merchants quietly tell their equally knowing customers, that fifty per cent of a differential duty, in favour of the British planter, would virtually be but little of a protection; or, at least, that the slave-owner of Cuba could easily afford him so much. When we find practical men addressing practical men in such terms as these, it is surely not to be wondered at that our West Indian suffering friends should display some degree of impatience when they hear it urged in the high places of Parliament, and elsewhere,

that with economy of management, and improvements in cultivation, they ought to be able to contend successfully in a competition with sugar which is the produce of slave-labour.

To the same effect, and in strict consistency, we find the intelligent foreign merchants above referred to—Messrs Drake, Brothers, and Co. of Havanna—on the 8th of January 1848, addressing their constituents in these terms—the intelligent reader will mark the contrast,—“The production of 1847 has far exceeded that of any previous year, and the prices obtained by planters have been so highly remunerative, that they are enabled to adopt every means for the further extension of their crops.” And that the cause of such unprecedented prosperity of the slave-owner, and of his highly remunerative prices, which so enabled him to carry out the most extensive improvements on his cane cultivation, might not be disputed or unappreciated by himself or others, another circular says—“During the past year the prices of sugar in our markets were supported at high rates, with but slight and temporary fluctuations, notwithstanding the large crop. This was mainly owing to the unprecedentedly heavy shipments to the United States *and to Great Britain*, aided by a well-sustained inquiry from Spain, with a fair demand from other parts.” To show that the writers of these circulars were quite correct, in ascribing the increase in the Cuban production of 1847 over that of 1846 to the opening of the British markets, and the supporting of



the prices to the “unprecedentedly heavy shipments to Great Britain,” it may be proper to mention the fact, that the quantity of foreign sugar (a large portion of it being from Cuba) imported into Great Britain in 1847, was nearly double that of 1846; the respective quantities being 63,211 tons of foreign sugar imported in 1846, and 123,762 tons of foreign sugar imported in 1847.

It was a free-trade argument used by Mr Bright, in 1848, that the statute of 1846 could not be said to have increased the slave trade—or, in other words, the prosperity of the slave countries and colonies—seeing that the number of slaves imported into Cuba in 1846 exceeded (which they did by about a thousand) the number imported in 1847. And it has often, in the British House of Commons and elsewhere, been said, that the evidence adduced on the subject of West India distress is to be regarded with distrust and suspicion, being the evidence of interested parties. But without going into this oft-agitated question, or attempting any answer to this very convenient way of disposing of the concurrent statements of a host of persons, all otherwise most credible, what is to be said of this evidence from the slaveholders themselves? We have here a statement on the part of the Cubans, that they were able, even before the passing of the act of 1846, to undersell the British colonist, were he protected in the home market by a differential duty of fifty per cent; and further, we have the same parties consistently accounting for the large

crop and highly remunerating prices of 1847, by attributing both to the encouragement given, and demand created, by the large exportation to Great Britain consequent on the passing of that act.

Nor can it be said that it is anything connected with his climate, soil, or mode of cultivation, that gives the slaveholder so great an advantage. It cannot be said that he has surpassed, or even come up to the British colonist, in regard to improved modes of culture or of manufacturing : *that* has not, and cannot be said. The existence of slavery, the liberty to work his fields and manufacture his crop by means of slaves, is the alone cause which creates the difference in the expense.

But if the Cuban or other slaveholder can undersell, or compete with, the British colonist, even when the latter is protected by a differential duty, what is to be the result when the parties shall be placed on an entire equality, as they will now, under the operation of the Sugar Duties Bill, be at no very distant date? It is this consideration I would earnestly desire to draw attention to ; and, in particular, I would desire to draw to it the attention of the numerous friends of the Negro race. I make no pretensions to the spirit of prophecy, and I confess myself very much at sea as to the future prospects of these beautiful islands of the Western Archipelago, in which I passed so many pleasant days. But, without pretending to see far into the future, there are one or two things that may safely be predicated as to the ulterior results.

Should the downward, ruinous tendency continue—if it be not arrested by the legislative measures of England, or by some other contingency—one of two things will certainly follow : either the British West Indian Islands will cease to be cultivated for the growth of sugar, and the estates, at present so occupied, will be devoted to the culture of other things; or, ceasing to be cultivated at all for purposes of exportation, these estates will be deserted entirely by their European proprietors, and either allowed to become overgrown with “bush,” or be taken possession of for Negro gardens and independent villages. In either case, what becomes of our cheap sugar? The price is now kept down chiefly by the competition between the free-grown sugar of the British possessions and the slave-grown sugar of Brazil, Cuba, and Porto Rico. There is a supply from the colonial possessions of other countries, &c., but that supply is not so considerable as to affect the present argument. Now, what would be the effect of the supply of sugar from the British colonial possessions, in the western seas, being destroyed, or even materially lessened? What consequences might naturally be expected to ensue from a serious diminution in the sugar productions of the British West Indies?\* The first most obvious

\* In reference to this part of the subject, it was in view to have given the reader a tabular statistical statement, showing the proportion which the production of, and the amount of importations *from*, the British West Indian possessions bears to the sugar productions of the whole world, and to the total importation of sugar into Great Britain; and also the proportion which the British West Indian

answer to these questions is,—That such a falling off in the supply would of necessity produce an enhancing of the price. On this all are agreed. But, would this enhancement of the price be temporary or permanent? and, if merely the former, would it endure for a great length of time? Without, at least for the present, considering the *value* of the argument which arises from supposing that the proper answer to this question is, that any advancement of price so created would not be of long duration—I am solicitous of considering the soundness of the opinion such an answer embodies; and that chiefly because I have found the opinion one generally

sugar, retained for consumption, bears to the whole sugar consumed in this country—as well as some additional particulars on these subjects. Indeed, I had possessed myself of many materials to enable me to do this with accuracy; and, in the collection of these, had availed myself of the information and intelligence of several gentlemen practically and minutely acquainted with the sugar trade, among whom I would respectfully name Messrs Connal & Co., of Glasgow. But, the details and particulars being collected, I have found the total sugar production of the whole world so variously stated, and subject to so many explanations; the annual importation of sugar into Great Britain so fluctuating, and its consumption therein so various, (depending mainly on the rate of wages;) and the proportion between foreign sugar and molasses, and colonial sugar and molasses used in this country liable to so many qualifying explanations, that, to carry out the task I thus contemplated, would have led me far beyond the limits to which this Chapter ought to extend. Besides, I also found, that for all the purposes of my argument, and without in the least affecting the soundness of the conclusions arrived at, the statistical premises may be set forth in a general way, and in round numbers. Of this the reader will of course judge for himself, when he has completed his perusal of my remarks.

prevalent among some men whose views are entitled to the highest respect. Now, the most careful consideration I have been able to give the subject, leads me to the conclusion that any considerable diminution in the cultivation—and consequently in the sugar production—of the British West Indies, would to a certainty lead to such a permanent, or at least long continued, enhancement of the price of sugar in this country, as would seriously interfere with its consumption, enrich the slaveholders of Brazil and of Spain, and their respective governments, encourage slavery, and procrastinate the period of its endurance; and prove that the English sugar legislation of 1846 and 1848 had been at least but a short-sighted policy. Let the soundness of this opinion be tested by the consideration of the following facts.

The production of, and the demand for, sugar throughout the world is nearly balanced; so that any derangement in the sources of supply only leads to an enhancing of the price in all the markets; and any additional demand in one country can only be supplied by a proportionate withdrawal from the others. Nay, more: if the supply of sugar has increased, the consumption has increased in even more than an equal ratio. Up to 1842, the quantity of sugar made for exportation by the whole sugar-making countries and colonies of the world, was estimated at about 670,000 tons; in 1849, (according to the circular of Messrs Trueman & Rouse, dated 1st June of that year,) about 970,000 tons. Both these estimates

are exclusive of the beetroot-sugar of France, Prussia, and Belgium, &c., which may safely be taken at 100,000 tons in 1842, and 90,000 tons in 1849; the production of sugar from beet having unquestionably fallen off during later years. The total sugar production of 1842 was thus under 800,000 tons, and that of 1849 above 1,050,000 tons. Now, while such was the production for the supply of this necessary of life for the whole world, what was the quantity, or about the average quantity, consumed in Great Britain? And what was and is the proportion of that consumption supplied by those noble West Indian possessions, whose possible abandonment we are now contemplating? Here, too, the statistics might be given in round numbers, without affecting the argument. The numbers stated will, however, be found to be as nearly as possible correct. It appears, from the valuable tables of Mr Porter, that the quantity of sugar (including molasses, equivalent to sugar) retained in this country for consumption for each of the ten years between, and inclusive of, the years 1830 and 1840, was about 200,000 tons (the numbers ranging between 190,000 tons and 220,000 tons, nearly according to the rise and fall in the rate of wages.) We have seen that, up to 1840, the total production (beetroot-sugar inclusive) was considerably short of 800,000 tons. But by 1849 both numbers had greatly increased; that which indicates the consumption of this country having, however, increased in the greater ratio. As above stated, the whole sugar (beet included) produced in

1849, may be estimated at about 1,050,000 tons. But the consumption of sugar in Great Britain for 1849 was 299,880 tons, and of molasses 40,620 tons; and, reducing the molasses to sugar, the total consumption of Great Britain for 1849 may safely be stated at upwards of 317,000 tons.

With the above-stated facts before him, it is quite unnecessary to say to any one that a serious diminution in the sugar production of the British West Indian colonies would operate very injuriously on the comforts as well as on the pockets of the people of Great Britain. But we are brought, even still more conclusively, to the same result, when we consider the proportion which the importation from the British possessions in the West Indies bears to the whole importation of sugar into this country. If not from time immemorial, at least ever since sugar became the necessary of life it is now regarded, the sugar consumed in Great Britain has been mainly supplied from her own colonial empire. As a matter of course, this remark is made without reference to the earlier introduction of sugar into England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when, according to Mr M'Culloch, it was brought over to this country by the Venetians and Genoese in small quantities, and as an article of high luxury. Indeed, it was not till about the beginning of the eighteenth century that the consumption of sugar in Great Britain reached an amount to call for special notice. Even during the first year of that century, the total consumption was

only 10,000 tons; while up to the year 1786 the increase had raised it to 81,000 tons, or thereby. Its subsequent rapid increase may be understood from remarks which have been previously made; and had it not been made so very much a subject of taxation and of revenue, there can be no doubt but that the consumption would have extended itself with much greater rapidity, to the increase of the population, the extension of the cultivation, and the advancement of the general prosperity of the British West Indies. Now, till within the last few years, nearly the whole of the sugar thus supplied for home consumption has been drawn from the dependencies of Great Britain—the duty on the importation on foreign sugar being so high as to amount to a prohibition, or nearly so. Nay more, up to about the year 1820, almost the whole of the sugar used in this country was brought from our tropical possessions in the West Indian seas. Up to the year named, the importation of East Indian sugar was very trifling; and it was not till 1825, when the sugar of the Mauritius was placed on an equal footing with that imported from the British colonies in the West Indies, that the importation of sugar from the Mauritius became considerable in its amount.

Even yet, and notwithstanding the great change which has come over the spirit of our commercial policy; leaving out of view that system under which, if not in consequence of which, Great Britain attained a position of commercial greatness unrivalled in ancient,



and without parallel in modern times; and notwithstanding, also, that by the philanthropic abolition of slavery in our own colonies, while it yet continued in the colonies which surrounded them, and in which produce similar to theirs is manufactured, we have made the sugar question a special and exceptional case; notwithstanding that, in disregard of these and other considerations, the door has been opened to a competition between foreign slave-grown and colonial free-grown sugar in the markets of this country—still, a very large proportion of the whole sugar consumed in Great Britain is supplied from our own colonial possessions in the West Indian Archipelago. By lessening the number of labourers for conducting the operations in the fields, or at the boiling-house and distillery, one of the effects of the Emancipation Act was to inflict a heavy blow upon the production of the British West Indies. It fell off very greatly. In 1834 it was 192,098 tons; in 1841 it had fallen to 107,500 tons; thereafter it revived in consequence of the introduction of machinery, and the adoption of improved modes of husbandry and manufacture, till 1846 when it again fell off to 107,368 tons. It has since somewhat improved, and in 1849 the quantity of sugar imported into this country from the British West Indies was 142,240 tons; while 120,870 tons were brought from the Mauritius and the East Indies, and 98,045 tons from foreign parts—all exclusive of the importation of molasses.

It is thus seen that, even yet, the sugar imported from her own possessions in the West Indies forms a large proportion of the whole sugar imported into Great Britain ; so that any serious diminution in the amount of that import, (or, in other words, in the extent of the sugar cultivation of the British West Indies,) would have a very serious effect on the price of sugar in this country. But the most important consideration is yet to come. Nothing more conclusively appears, from a comparison of the statistical tables relative to the sugar trade, than does the fact that while, on a comparison of years, the importation of foreign sugar is increasing, that of British colonial is diminishing. The relative proportions may vary in different years, but the general result is as I have stated it. The supply of foreign sugar and molasses is increasing; and if matters progress even just as they have been doing, the gradual increase in the amount required will be supplied by importations from foreign, and almost entirely from slaveholding countries and colonies, to the great encouragement of slavery and of the slave trade, if not to the ruin of the free sugar-growing colonies of Great Britain.

But will not a continuance of the present system eventuate in the ruin of the British West Indian colonies, at least as sugar-producing countries? To my mind it appears that it must do so. Already the present competition in the home market, between free and slave grown sugar, has had the effect of throwing out of cultivation many of the sugar estates in the

British possessions. If such is the case even now, when there exists a protective or differential duty of about 5s. 9d. per cwt., what is to be the effect in 1854, when the operation of this principle of competition has been pushed to its climax? Must not that effect be the sure, though gradual, withdrawal of the British West Indian colonists altogether from the competition? And if so, must not the price of sugar then rise, and rise very greatly? No doubt it has been and may be said, that even were such a deplorable result to be the legitimate issue of a continuance of our free-trade policy as regards the article of sugar, yet the effect would not be the permanent enhancement of the price of this now necessary commodity, inasmuch as any serious falling off in the production in the British colonies would stimulate production in foreign countries, and the extent of territory in which sugar might be grown being very great, the consequence of that stimulated production would be the maintenance of present prices. Now, apart from the answer to this argument, that it resolves the whole question into one of cheapness of price, I more than question its soundness; nay, I deny that it is sound. We have seen that, even with the production of the tropical possessions of England in the West Indies, the production of the sugar produced in all parts of the globe has not increased in a greater ratio than the demand for it has done; and we have also seen how large a proportion of that total production is the sugar made in the British West Indian possessions. I cannot, therefore,

suppose that even the most enthusiastic advocate for the integrity of free-trade principles, or the most credulous believer in the sufficiency of such principles to maintain and preserve a due equilibrium between the demand and the supply, can imagine that, should the time ever come when the competition of Brazilian, Cuban, and other slave-grown sugar shall have driven the British planter out of the market, the former will not have a virtual monopoly of the sugar market, and the advantage of the enhanced prices which such monopoly will of necessity create. Is there any one, who knows anything of the statistics of the sugar trade, who supposes for a moment that the supply of sugar to be had from the British possessions in the East, the Mauritius, the free colonies of other countries, or any other place, would suffice to prevent the production of such a result? The sugar annually made by means of slaves in Brazil, and in the colonies of Spain, at present amounts to nearly a third more than the whole quantity made in the British West Indian colonies, British India, and the Mauritius. Were the first of the three last-mentioned sources of supply cut off, (as my argument supposes,) the production from the two last-mentioned would not amount to much more than the quantity at present exported from Brazil alone. It is not, then, to be supposed that even the party most desirous of the continuance of the present system of colonial policy, and most prepared to go the whole length of meeting all the consequences that may or can result from its application, rather than

go back upon any part of this favourite theory of free trade, will be disposed to conduct the argument upon the assumption or admission, that probably, or even possibly, a continuance of the present system of placing slave-grown and free-grown sugar on an equality, in the home market, may eventuate in driving the British colonist out of the market altogether. Such person will rather be disposed to deny the probability, or even the possibility, of such a result. Indeed, it is plainly the only course which there is left for him to pursue. It would never do to suppose the possibility of our West Indian colonies ceasing entirely to export sugar to the mother country. Not only is the very idea one that, if seriously entertained, would rouse the feelings and excite the energies of the whole nation; not only would it involve the supposition, that all our oft-quoted £20,000,000 of compensation money had been thrown away; not only would it be to assume that all Britain's efforts to ameliorate the condition of the unfortunate sons of Ham in the West Indies had only terminated in leaving them in a worse condition than that in which they were, when first, in 1807, our course of legislative philanthropy was adventured on; not only would the idea of the British West Indian colonists abandoning the cultivation of the sugar-cane involve all this and more: it would likewise involve the admission that the policy of the sugar duties statutes of 1846 and 1848 had failed; that, while the object aimed at by our new

legislative acts was to cheapen sugar to the British consumer, that object had not been eventually attained—nay, the result had been the other way. After a few years of cheapness, caused by unequal competition between slave and free grown sugar, the production of the latter had been given up as unprofitable; and the manufacturer of the former, having it all his own way, or nearly so, had advanced prices to a higher point than they had ever attained before the introduction of the measure which had thus driven the British planter from the field of competition.

Supposing the Cuban or Brazilian to be actuated by the ordinary principles of human nature, such a result may be predicated, with certainty, as the issue of the British West Indies being driven out of the sugar market. But even supposing these parties to be so negligent of their own interests, or so enamoured of the principles of free trade, as to allow prices to remain at the minimum to which competition had reduced them, there is still the little less than certainty of the Spanish and Brazilian governments imposing export duties, or additional export duties, so soon as they found that their doing so would not prevent the consumption of their sugar by England and her possessions.

Now, if there be any probability in the views above stated—if there be any grounds even, for supposing that the result contemplated is within the immense eyele of possible things—is this not a subject which is

well worthy of the serious consideration, not only of the statesmen and legislators of this great country, but of the whole thinking portion of the nation? And if it be the fact, as many do now aver, and offer to prove it to be, (by a host of witnesses too practical to be themselves deceived, too honest to desire to deceive others, and too consistent and concurrent in their testimony to be easily gainsayed,) that the anticipated issue is, even now, in operation; that the results of that legislation which will in 1854 place colonial, free, and foreign slave-grown sugar on an equal footing,—in respect of duties, for, relative value considered, they are already on an equality—has been to lessen, and will be to destroy, the production of the former kind altogether,—surely it is high time for all who feel an interest in the welfare of England, or of her West India colonies, or even a desire for permanent cheapness of sugar, to exert themselves, if they may, by so doing, discover a means whereby so great an evil may be prevented or avoided. Here the question is only considered as it is likely to affect the interests of the sugar consumers of Great Britain. We have, for the present, nothing to do with the effects of the possible or probable lessening or abandonment of sugar cultivation in the West Indies by the British colonist, on the condition and destinies of these colonies, or of the Negro race which at present inhabit them—that is a separate question; and it is a wide and an important one, for which we may, or may not, have room to

treat in this work. The subject here in hand is the interest the whole inhabitants of Great Britain have in the consideration of the question of whether a continuance of that legislation, which will eventually place slave and free productions on an equal footing in the markets of England, is, or is not, likely to lead to the abandonment or serious diminution of sugar cultivation in the West Indies—and this question will be found to be a sufficiently important one. To treat of it at the length it would justify, if not require, were beyond the limits of a work like this ; but a few facts and considerations will, it is conceived, be sufficient to place the subject in a light which will show that it at least deserves, and loudly calls for, the most serious attention.

Were the subject not encircled with elements of painful reflection to most persons who have personally witnessed the blighted hopes and ruined fortunes of our fellow-subjects in the West Indies, it would be simply amusing to see the manner in which the topic of West Indian distress is generally treated, by specimens of every class of politicians in this country. It is not confined to one class, it seems to pervade all—Tory, Conservative, Whig, Radical, and Chartist—all seem to adopt something of the same style of getting over or away from the consideration of the subject. All the parties here referred to profess to admit the existence of West Indian distress, and all of them seem also to admit that the West Indians have not had



justice done to them, and to deplore that such is the fact; but all of them, at the same time, decline to commit themselves to any practical remedy, or at least decline to admit that any such remedy can possibly be looked for in an interference with their own peculiar and favourite political nostrums. The Tory or Conservative will shake his head, and, while he admits that the West Indies are nearly ruined, he will point, at the same time, to the fact that the landed interests of England have also had much of depressing influence to contend against—as if there were any proper or legitimate bond of connexion between the two; or as if, even though there were, the repetition of an injustice were an extenuation, instead of an aggravation, of an offence. The Radical and Chartist, also, will complacently admit the fact of West Indian depression; but they will, at the same time, declaim loudly of sugar being now a necessary of the poor man's life—of the advantages of cheap sugar—and of its being expedient, in all cases, that a nation should buy in the cheapest as well as sell in the dearest markets: as if it were a settled thing that the present free-trade policy, as regards this commodity, were the one most calculated to produce a permanent lowering of the price; or as if there were nothing either in national faith, or in national consistency, where self-interest, or what was supposed to be so, stood in the way. Now it is only right that all this evasion of the real argument should be put aside, and that this truly great West Indian question should

be viewed apart from all political views, either of one kind or of another. The question is one of interest as well as of justice, and the sooner the nation views it in this light, the better for all parties. It is the interest as well as the bargain of this country, that she should protect her colonists from the competition of slave-grown produce. It is her bargain, because, when she tied the hands of these colonists, by precluding them from the employment of slaves in the cultivation and management of their estates, she conditioned, as well expressly as by implication, that at no future period would they ever find her so far and so decidedly encouraging slavery as to expose them to competition from the slave-grown produce of foreigners, at least in the home market. It is her interest, because, it having been to demonstration and by experience proven, that, in the present state of the West Indies, culture or labour by freemen can never be so remunerative as (in other words, can never compete with) the labour of slaves, the necessary effect of placing the two on equal footing must be to drive the free produce out of the market; and, consequently, to lead eventually to the abandonment of the sugar plantations, boiling-houses, and distilleries, at present in cultivation and operation in the free colonies of England. The word advisedly used here is “eventually”—not because there is, even now, any doubt of the fact that the cultivation of a sugar estate, in most of the British colonies in the West Indies, cannot be profitably conducted in the face of a com-

petition on equal terms (as will soon be the case) with the slave-grown sugar of Cuba, Porto Rico, or the Brazils—no ; the qualifying word is employed, simply because the writer has had many opportunities of observing the “hope against hope” which animates the great body of West Indian planters in the British colonies. With their all perilled on the venture, and knowing personally and full well how important to England is the preservation of her colonies, as accessories and aids to her mercantile and naval supremacy, and strong in an ardent attachment to the constitutions and institutions of their native land, these West Indian proprietors cannot permit themselves to believe that the present system of misgovernment is to last for ever. They cannot think that it will be allowed to work out its dire results ; they hope and trust that the eyes of those in power at home will be opened to the real existing state of things ; and that the voices of the many, and the really interested, are not to be silenced or disregarded for ever, because of the mis-statements of the few, who find it to be their interest to echo—no matter at what expense of consistency or of truth—the opinions of those to whom their statements are addressed. Thus it is that the great body of West Indian planters and proprietors have gone on, year after year, struggling against the difficulties with which they have had to contend. But it were a curious inquiry—one both painful and profitable—to inquire into the sacrifices at which the struggle has been kept up. It formed one

of the arguments in favour of the Emancipation Bill of 1833, that it would improve the condition as well of the planter as of the slave. How has this promise been kept? No doubt, the emancipation money went to relieve the estates that had been previously burdened with debt, and to relieve also the anxieties of many mortgagees, who were previously somewhat doubtful about the security on which their advances had been made. Nay, even the fact that their estates were relieved in this way from their former debts, operated injuriously as regards many of the proprietors of West Indian properties. At the time the emancipation money was paid, many of these estates were burdened so helplessly, and under such circumstances, that, for a present and immediate payment of two-thirds of the amount of the mortgage, the creditor who held it would have been glad to have given up his security altogether. Nay, in many cases creditors would have been well paid to have got settlement on these terms. An estate nominally valued at £50,000 was burdened with debt to the extent of £35,000; but the real selling value of the property was probably not much more than the amount of the mortgage, and the holder of the security very probably would gladly have given some deduction from the amount of his bond, to have been put into possession of hard cash for the balance of it—at least he would have been so, had he foreseen the result of subsequent legislation. But the Emancipation Act, with its attendant compensation, came; and it being the principle of the statute that the com-

pensation money should go, in the first place, to the wiping off the real debt on the burdened estates, the mortgagee found himself in possession of a present payment of one-half of his debt, with still the security of the whole estate for the payment of the other moiety. The effect of this partial payment of mortgages on estates, under the operation of the emancipation statute, coupled with the depreciation in the value of West Indian properties, consequent upon the actual working of that act, has thus led to a very strange state of things, and of feeling, in some of our West Indian possessions. I cannot better illustrate this than by giving the substance of an argument I once heard maintained by a professional friend, whose acquaintance I made in one of the Leeward Islands. Speaking of an actual case, in which he had been consulted, he told me that it was his intention to urge in court the plea that the mortgagee, seeking to foreclose, had no right to do so, for recovery of the amount or balance stated in the face of his mortgage. His reasoning, or that he purposed making use of, was this—You, the mortgagee, lent your £35,000 on my client's estate, at a time when you and he both believed it to be worth £50,000; and, in doing so, you acted on, and were solely influenced by, that belief. But the Emancipation Act came; and while, under its operation, you received some £10,000 or £15,000 of your debt, the other effect of it was to reduce the value of the whole estate to a sum not more than adequate for the payment of your balance. Seeing, then, that we both adven-

tured on a principle or valuation which has turned out fallacious—seeing that the estate we mutually supposed to be worth £50,000 has, through the effects of legislative interference, turned out to be worth not more than £20,000, why should I, the owner, be the sole loser, while you the mortgagee, should lose nothing at all? The fallacy in such an argument is, of course, very obvious; and I doubt not but that my sharp-witted friend himself saw it. But the fact that such an argument was made use of by a professional man of ability, and that it met with acceptance from the party at a governor's table who heard it, affords an element for consideration, in endeavouring to arrive at a correct estimate of the sentiments generally prevalent in the colonies themselves, on the subject of the treatment they have received under the legislative measures of the mother country.

While, however, in their hope of better things, the vast majority of the British planters in the West Indies have gone on struggling against the depreciating influences to which they have been exposed—and while I doubt not but that they, or the major number of them, will continue still to do so for perhaps many years to come, even though no legislative attempt should be made to arrest their downward progress—nay more, while even this very depression may, in illustration of the principle that “sweet are the uses of adversity,” teach some of these planters an economy or frugality of living and of management they would not otherwise have practised—yet sure

am I of two things, and these two things I would desire to impress on the minds of all who unite with me in the opinion that, without her colonies, England would be but a skeleton of her present self; and who, consequently, like me, desire that the prosperity of these colonies should be looked after, just as if they formed an integral part of the empire of Great Britain. The facts referred to are these:—In the first place, the evils predicated as likely to arise from exposing colonial sugar to an equal competition with foreign slave-grown sugar, have been felt in part already. In several of the colonies, estates formerly flourishing are now deserted, and are hastening back to a state of nature with all the luxuriant rankness of tropical vegetation. Free labour may possibly, in other circumstances, compete with slave labour, even in sugar making; but it certainly cannot do so with the means of labour at present to be had in the British West Indies—the colony of Barbadoes alone excepted. In the other colonies it has never been afforded a fair chance. In the second place, the same thing is now going on, and is evidencing its operation by the withdrawal of capital from the cultivation of the soil, and from the manufacture of the juices produced from the cut cane. The inevitable result must be—if no interposing cause prevent—that in some ten, or it may perchance be twenty years, although I cannot think it can be so long, the sugar production of the British West Indian colonies will form no barrier in the way of a rise of prices for the benefit of

Brazil, or of the slave-employing colonies of Spain. This opinion will to some seem extravagant; but I would that the question presently at issue between the British West Indian planters and the home government could be brought to this arbitrament—could be determined by the former being brought to an assize, and challenged to the proof of the above two specific positions. The desertion of estates, and the causes of such desertion, could be established by the evidence of their unfortunate owners—the only objection to their examination being the great amount of time that would be consumed in hearing the dispiriting statements of so many witnesses, speaking each from his own personal and dear-bought experience;—while the continued operation of the same cause in the production of the same result, and the annual lessening of the number of acres devoted to cane cultivation, might be established—not only by the united testimonies of the West Indian planters and proprietors, but by the evidence of nearly every Governor who has held the reins of power in the West Indian colonies for the last four years. It has been already remarked that it was to be expected that these gentlemen, if not themselves thoroughly impressed with the wisdom of the present colonial policy, would at least do their utmost to contradict or controvert the tales of decadence and ruin which the West Indians have of late years been annually pouring forth. No doubt, neither governors nor governed could deny the extensive failures that have of late years been so common among West Indian



merchants in this country, and which, it is notorious, have arisen from no other cause than the unexpected introduction of slave-grown produce to compete with the produce of those who were neither allowed to work their estates by means of slaves, nor provided with a sufficient supply of freemen wherewith to cultivate them, although the latter was unquestionably promised them. Neither could any candid man deny the evidence of back-going afforded by abandoned estates and deserted sugar-works—the former becoming overgrown with brushwood, with that rapidity which is the characteristic of growth within the tropics, and the latter fast crumbling into ruin and decay. Such real evidence is not to be gainsayed. But what cannot be denied may sometimes be extenuated; and, instead of leaving the dry details to tell their own tale of blighted hopes and ruined expectations, any one, desirous of giving only a favourable account of matters, could point to grounds of hope—to collateral causes that may have aided in the production of unfortunate results—and to the removal of these minor causes as likely to lead to an amended state of matters. And, to some extent at least, this has been done by the governors of our West Indian possessions. So far as truth could justify, or as a ground of hope for the future exists, these gentlemen have been most assiduous in pointing out sources of consolation and of improvement; and certainly the most cheering description of West Indian positions and prospects that can, without violation of truth, be

given, are those contained in the able despatches and reports from such governors as Lord Harris, Colonel Reid, Mr Higginson, or Sir Charles Grey, &c., to be found in the pages of the Blue Books. And yet what do these reports bear? Do not one and all of them bear out the assertions I have advanced—that the consequence of the Sugar Duties Bill of 1846 has been to throw land out of cultivation in the British colonies; and that this result is still progressing, and, if unchecked, must end in the serious diminution of the sugar production of the British West Indies? In a despatch of Lord Harris, of 18th September 1847, after alluding to the decrease in production, and to the abandonment of estates, his Lordship says—“I do not hesitate to express to your Lordship my conviction, that if this colony (Trinidad) is not to be left to subside into a state of comparative barbarism, which would result from the ruin of its larger proprietors, some more than ordinary relief is necessary to support it in the contest which it, in common with the other British West Indian colonies, is now engaged in. Circumstanced as it is, *I believe it incapable* of successfully competing in the British market with the produce of countries in which slavery is still permitted.” Colonel Reid, in 1848, thus records his sentiments—“My opinion is, that sugar cultivation, by free labour, cannot yet withstand competition, on equal terms, with slave labour, and that freedom should be nursed by protection for a considerable time to come.” And again—“If there be

no protection, the cultivation of sugar will be further given up in Granada, and it will dwindle in all the Windward islands, excepting Barbadoes." It will be kept in view that Colonel Reid is only reporting as to the islands composing the Windward group, and that his somewhat questionable exception, even, of Little England, (Barbadoes,) is on account of its excessive population making labour cheap, and thus enabling the planters in that island to hold head against the competition of the slaveholder. It is important that this be kept in view, as it bears upon the question of remedy, to be, in conclusion of this Chapter, very briefly noticed.

To the same effect, Governor-general Higginson, writing from, and mainly of, the populous and, as I have already shown, *comparatively* prosperous island of Antigua, says,—“It must be conceded that, for obvious reasons, free-grown sugar can never yield so lucrative a return as that produced by foreign slaves.” While with equal definiteness writes Sir Charles C. Grey from Jamaica, on 21st September 1847, (and in various other despatches,) —“There is a sincere apprehension amongst the persons most thoroughly acquainted with the subject, that, at the present London prices of West Indian sugar, and the present rate of duties, *it will be impossible to carry on here, without loss and ruin, the cultivation of sugar for exportation.*”

Sufficient as they are for the case I undertook to prove—abundant as they are to show, to the satisfaction

of every unbiassed mind, that the ablest of the representatives of the crown of England, resident in the West Indies, admit both the present desertion of estates, and its probable continuance and extension, unless something be done to arrest its progress:—the passages I have quoted are far from being all that is contained, even in the despatches quoted from, to the same effect. Neither have these despatches been selected (any more than are the passages from them excerpted) with any degree of care; both are taken almost at random. Nearly all the despatches from these governors to the Colonial Office, since 1840, have borne evidence to the fact of West Indian decadence, and of the impossibility of the British West Indian planter, with the means of labour at present at his command, competing with the slave-owner of Brazil, Cuba, or Porto Rico. Does not such evidence establish the assertion that, unless the British planter be aided or protected in some way, the result must eventually be the withdrawal of the British colonies from the competition of the sugar market? And when such result has been produced, what then becomes of the argument of “cheap sugar?”—that argument by the use of which the people of England were reconciled to the adoption of a measure which has depressed the value of land in the British West Indian colonies *far more than one half*, and increased the value of real estate in Cuba and Porto Rico *fully one third*. If any one doubts this, let him consult any capitalist acquainted with the subject, or let him inquire

if, and on what terms, money can be raised on the security of a sugar estate, boiling-works, and distillery in Trinidad or Jamaica, and on a sugar plantation and an *ingenio* in Cuba. The result will more than confirm my assertion, and startle the incredulous inquirer not a little.

But the passages above quoted from some of the despatches of the Governor of the British West Indian possessions, remind me that there is yet another branch of this subject which ought not to be wholly overlooked, however shortly it may require to be noticed.

We have hitherto been considering the subject exclusively in its application to the sugar consumers in this country,—solely in a selfish light, and in its relation to the question of cheap or dear sugar to the people of England. But Lord Harris is of opinion, that the lapsing of the fertile island of Trinidad into a state of barbarism may be regarded as a not improbable event, if the present system be persevered in; and Colonel Reid feels convinced “that, without protection, the *most* serious result would not be the loss of sugar; but the consummation of the greatest act of human legislation—the abolition of slavery—will be retarded, and perhaps endangered.” Analogous passages, from the despatches of other governors, might be quoted; and surely the fact that such men, so situated and so experienced, have deemed it not merely their province, but their duty, to lift up their warning—their almost prophetic voices—to that Government

of whom their appointments were held, in the way of caution against a continued perseverance in the Ministerial policy, is in itself one of the strongest facts that go to prove the existence of the danger which is here referred to. Will any man of sense and reason permit himself to doubt that, were the governors who penned these admirable and truth-telling despatches to be now appointed a commission, with power to legislate for the West Indian colonies in their relationship to the mother country, their very first act would be to make a very serious inroad upon the principles of that legislation which influenced the Sugar Duties Bills of 1846 and 1848? It is impossible to doubt but that such would be the case? And again, does not this in itself prove the necessity for the immediate adoption of remedial measures? That a body of enlightened men—chosen because fit to govern in tropical climes—after residing for years in the society and midst the scenes of which they write, have (many of them, in the face of preconceived opinions, which retarded conviction) arrived at the conclusions, 1st. That slave-grown produce will drive free-grown produce out of the market altogether; and 2d. That, if this be the issue, the British colonies will lapse into barbarism—appears to me to be the strongest of all possible reasons for urging the adoption of some measures of relief. If it be said that the statements of these governors is but testimony—evidence capable of being rebutted by contrary proof; I answer—Be it so. But it is at least testimony *omni exceptione major*

—the evidence of persons entitled to the very fullest belief—at all events, until an equal amount of unexceptionable testimony has been adduced on the other side of the question. Let it also be observed, that this testimony to West Indian decadence, thus drawn from despatches sent to the Government, is altogether apart from, and independent of, the testimony of the British West Indian planters themselves—men who have been so often and so undeservedly accused of making a parade of their distress.

And why should it be doubted, either that the non-profitable cultivation of a sugar estate and the unremunerative working of a boiling-house and distillery, should lead to their abandonment? or that the abandonment of the cultivation should lead to the lapsing of the colonies into a state of worse than pristine barbarism? The first is simply the operation of the law of self-preservation. Tropical agriculture, and sugar and rum-making, are not carried on by the British any more than by the Spanish planter as a luxury, or for his own gratification; nor are these operations conducted save at very heavy annual outlay and expense. People will carry on a losing trade so long as previously made profits and capital last, or as there is hope of the dawn of a brighter state of things. But the ceasing of the profits will sooner or later lead to the exhaustion of the capital; and, there being no “star of hope” seen in the horizon of the future, it is only in accordance with a principle of self-preservation, that the cultivation and the manufacture should be eventually given up.

And if the cultivation of the sugar-cane, and the manufacture and distillation of its juices be abandoned, what is there to induce the British colonists to remain in the West Indies? Does any one imagine that it is from the love of a tropical climate, or of tropical scenery, that the European conducts his operations under the sweltering heat of an almost vertical sun? Does any one think that there is anything like a considerable body of the white population in the West Indies, who would remain in them one hour longer than they can help, if all hope of the profitable cultivation of these colonies were at an end? If so, such person labours under a grievous misconception. There are many charming things to be seen and tasted within the tropics. Tropical nights are very lovely; tropical trees are oftentimes very graceful; some tropical dishes and fruits—turtle-soup and pine-apples in particular—are very delicious. But these, and all other tropical luxuries besides, would not suffice to detain our enterprising fellow-countrymen or their fair companions within the torrid zone, were it not that they have hitherto found it to be their interest to be there. The fair lady of British birth, whom love or duty has caused to make the beautiful islands of the Western Archipelago her temporary home; or her equally fair countrywoman of Creole origin, born of British parentage but within the tropic line, may give an occasional shudder, and draw her shawl or cloak closer around her form, as she listens to or feels the blasts of a northern winter. But I



am quite sure that I declare the sentiments of the great mass of the European inhabitants of the British West Indies, when I say, that there is not one of them who would consent to exchange *for ever* the bracing influences and fond associations of Great Britain, for all the brightness of that tropic sun—

“ Which scorches those it beams upon.”

Nay, more, I venture to assert, that the vast majority of the parties I refer to would not consent to remain in the West Indies one year longer than interest, duty, or necessity required.

If there be any one who doubts this, let him introduce the topic on board a West Indian steamer, and among a party expatriating themselves from England, and as the steamer slowly progresses in her south-west course. And if it be imagined that it is the tender recollections of those ties they are leaving behind them, that so moves the whole party to confess their love for England as a place of permanent residence, let the inquirer observe how the eye flashes, and the cheek kindles, among the family circles in the best of the West Indian mansions, when the conversation turns upon the far off home on English ground. No! There is not, there cannot be, a doubt of the fact. So soon as the West Indian colonies cease to be valuable possessions for the culture of the sugar-cane and the manufacture of its juices into sugar and into rum, from that hour we may date the commencement of their abandonment as places of residence or coloni-

sation by Europeans. This may be predicated of all the islands in the Western Archipelago, whether they belong to England, France, Spain, Denmark, Holland, or Sweden. But the observation has a peculiar appositeness and propriety, when considered with reference to the feelings usually, and in the West Indies pre-eminently, entertained by British colonists towards the mother country. It has been remarked as frequently as justly that, great as England has been and is as a colonising country, the fact of her being so has not proceeded from any dislike entertained by her emigrant children towards the land of their nativity. No colonists in the world carry abroad with them a greater love of home, more intense feelings of patriotism, or a larger amount of the *amor patriæ*, than do the colonists that leave her shores for settlement on a distant strand. To prove this fact, examples might be selected almost from every quarter of the globe. As a general rule, the colonists of Great Britain sympathise in every home feeling. Of England they may truly say that—

“Each flash of her genius their pathway enlightens,  
Every field she explores they are beckoned to tread;  
Each laurel she gathers their future day brightens;  
They rejoice with her living, and mourn with her dead.”

Of this patriotic feeling of our colonial fellow-subjects, towards the “queen of the islands” whence they have sprung, and with which they are connected, the traveller among the islands of the West Indian archipelago will have abundant and frequent evidence.

“Home” is the term universally applied to England by the white inhabitants of the British West Indian possessions. And in a periodical, oft-repeated visit to that “home,” is to be found the most highly prized of all the British colonist’s pleasures of memory and of hope.

Impressed with these convictions, I cannot suppose that any person acquainted either with West Indian climate, culture, and manufacture, or versant in the feelings of the white and even the coloured population of the British colonies, will contradict my assertion—that the cessation of cane-cultivation in the British West Indies would eventuate in their total abandonment by their present proprietors. The change might be very gradual; most probably it would be so: but, if there be any soundness in the premises which have guided me thus far in my reasoning, it would certainly be very sure. And if the period so to be anticipated should ever come, in what state would it leave these at present noble possessions? and what would then become of all that has been done, at such cost of life and treasure, to ameliorate the condition of the Negro race in the British West Indies? To what state would the colonies themselves be reduced? Would any other nation be disposed to take up what England had thus thrown away? Suppose England to permit this to be done, what people would be inclined to try so Quixotic an experiment—unless indeed under a return to a system, or a modified system, of slavery?

Is the Negro population of the West Indies yet in a fit state for self-government? With St Domingo experience ringing in his ears, he would be a bold man who would express much confidence in an affirmative answer to this question. And even though such answer could be with confidence given, on what principle is it expected that Negroes, under Negro domination, would work with advantage that soil which British energy had given up in despair? It were bootless, however, to prosecute the subject further; it is sufficient to point attention to the possibility of such events resulting from a continued perseverance in a certain line of policy. If there be any reasonable amount of truth in the statements which governors, planters, professional residents, and occasional visitors have, for the last four years, been pouring forth, as to the practical effects produced by British legislation on the cultivation of the sugar-cane in England's noble colonial possessions in the West Indies, the possibility becomes a probability. The conclusion is so manifest that there seems to be no mode of evading it, save by a denial of the premises on which it is based. Whether there are grounds on which such a denial can be supported, is a question that will be answered by each one according to his leanings, or to his views of the evidence. The views recorded in this Chapter are those formed on personal and dispassionate observation; and, midst the distrust incident to promulgating opinions on a question involving great interests, and to the expiscation and

settlement of which great—the greatest—talents have been devoted, it certainly gratifies and encourages the writer not a little to observe that, however ingenious, and however ably advocated, may have been the opinions of an opposite nature, the great majority of those men who have visited the West Indies, and who are practically acquainted with West Indian affairs, have expressed opinions of a confirmatory nature—have done so whatever may have been the nature of their business, or the objects of their visit.

But it may be said that all the preceding argument is based upon an assumption. I admit that it is so. It is acknowledged that, throughout the preceding reasoning—or rather, as the foundation of that reasoning—it has been assumed that, *in the present state of the labour market in the British West Indies, the produce of free labour cannot compete with that of slave labour, as regards the cost of production*. In other words, I have reasoned on the assumption that the oft-quoted and much-abused dictum, that free labour is as cheap as slave labour, has been found to be fallacious when applied to sugar-cultivation within the tropics. It is said that this has been taken for granted—and I would deem it a reprehensible waste of my reader's time to occupy it by proving at length a position so clear as is the one thus assumed. It is demonstrated by the experience of the past—particularly by that of the last four years; and a very brief summary of facts will show that it is so.

The duties at present exigible in Great Britain, on foreign and colonial sugar, are as follows:—

## FOREIGN.

White clayed sugar, or equal thereto, . .	19s. 10d. per cwt.
Brown clayed sugar, or equal thereto, . .	18s. 6d. „
Muscovado, or not equal to brown clayed, .	17s. 0d. „

## COLONIAL.

White clayed, or equal thereto, . . .	14s. 0d. „
Muscovado, or not equal to white clayed, .	12s. 0d. „

On a general view of this table, it would seem that, at present, there is a protective duty of nearly 6s. per hundredweight in favour of the produce of British colonies. But in operation it is not so; and that not merely because the greater part of the foreign slave-grown sugar, imported into this country, is generally of relatively higher value than the sugar brought from our own colonies, (so much more valuable that, quality considered, foreign and colonial sugar may even at present be considered to be on an equality,) but also because there are three scales of duty applicable to foreign sugars, while there are only two that apply to colonial. The great mass of the foreign sugars brought into England for consumption, is of the kind called “brown clayed, or equal thereto,” which at present (in March 1850) pays a duty of 18s. 6d. per cwt.; and, if the foreign sugar imported does not come quite up to that standard, it is admitted as foreign muscovado, &c., at a duty of 17s. per cwt. Now this foreign sugar, admitted at 17s. per cwt. (nearly the whole of it slave-grown,) comes into com-

petition with the colonial muscovado, which pays a duty of 12s. per cwt. The differential duty, therefore, cannot be fairly called more than 5s. per cwt.—a difference, quality considered, which practically amounts to no protection at all. A large quantity of the British colonial sugar imported into Great Britain, and particularly much of that brought from the West Indies, is of an inferior kind; and, even were the present state of things to continue, it seems obvious that it would be an equitable advantage to the British colonist, were there a third and a lower scale of duty, applicable to a third and an inferior description of colonial sugar.

But to return to the general argument—While the duties on the sugar imported into Great Britain are for the present as they have been above-stated, they are in a transition state. So far as it is differential, the duty will in a short time be equalised. On 5th July 1851, the duty on British plantation sugar will be reduced to 10s. per cwt., but, at the same time, the duty on foreign brown clayed sugar will be reduced to 15s. 6d. per cwt.; and thereafter, by a gradually descending scale, this differential duty will annually lessen until 3d July 1854, when it will disappear altogether, and the colonial and foreign sugars (slave-grown as well as free-grown) will then be admitted at the uniform and equal rate of 10s. per cwt. What effect an approximation to this state of things has already had, and what effect its complete realisation must necessarily have on British interests, on sugar cultivation

in the British West Indies, and on the destinies of the African race, enslaved and free, may be gathered from the following facts:—

One of the consequences which resulted from the emancipation of the slaves, in the British West Indian possessions, was, to decrease the sugar production in them, and to increase it in Cuba and Porto Rico. This was the case, even while foreign sugars were virtually excluded from the English market. The fact of the decrease in the British colonies appears from statistics already given. In 1834, the production was above 190,000 tons. Next year the quantity produced was less; and it continued to fall off till 1841, when it was so low as 107,500 tons. Since 1841 it has improved; and last year, the quantity exported from the British West Indies was 142,240 tons, exclusive of molasses. But it has never reached the average production previous to emancipation, notwithstanding that the increase of the sugar-consuming population has greatly increased the demand.

Now, while such has been one of the consequences of the Emancipation Act upon the British West Indian colonies, what has been its results in the colonies of Spain—that country whose colonial dependencies, aided by Brazil, produce that slave-grown sugar, which is the great competitor of free-grown produce in the markets of Europe? Here we are presented with a very different state of matters. Since 1843, Cuba and Porto Rico have more than trebled their productions. In 1828, they exported only 93,000



tons of sugar ; in 1847 they exported 305,000 tons. But here let me anticipate an objection to the application of the fact last stated, as aiding the argument in hand. It may be seen, that the great increase in the production of sugar in Cuba and Porto Rico, in 1847, was mainly owing to the impetus given to the cultivation in these islands, by the English Sugar Duties Bill of 1846. No doubt such is the fact ; but, instead of militating against it, the fact assists the present reasoning. It shows that slave labour in the tropics is so much cheaper than free labour, that the former can afford to give the latter great seeming advantages, and yet undersell it ; and, apart from this, it points attention to the true cause why, since Emancipation, sugar production has fallen off in the British colonial possessions—that cause being the felt deficiency in the means of labour. . . . For be it remembered that it is only in its connexion with the present condition of the labour market in the British West Indies, that it is said that “free labour cannot compete with slave labour.” Indeed, it is here that the essence of the great West Indian question may be said to lie. As an abstract proposition, I do not doubt, or rather I should be sorry to doubt, the equality, nay, the superiority of the labour of freemen over the tasked labour of slaves. But it is the circumstance which makes the case of the British West Indian planter an exceptional case—a *casus improvisus* in free-trade legislation, that, while a large portion of the “power” he had, wherewith to conduct his

agricultural and manufacturing operations, has been taken from him, no adequate attempt has been made to redeem the promise that a substitute for it would be provided.

Nor can this result surprise any one acquainted, even in a slight degree, with slave labour and free labour within the tropic line. The Emancipation Act of 1843 diminished the production of the British colonies, because it lessened the number of the labourers who tilled the fields and conducted the manufacturing operations. And the same statute, coupled with the Sugar Duties Act of 1846, increased the production of Cuba, Porto Rico, &c., because, while they opened up to the planters in these fertile islands an extensive new market for their produce, they had the means of coercing their existing labourers to extra, and, unfortunately, oftentimes to excessive exertion, and also of getting, from without, such additional workmen as it might be their interest to purchase or employ. Both results were the most natural that could be conceived. Before emancipation, there was no exuberance of supply in the labour market of the British colonies. The slaves were all profitably engaged. But the gradual consequence of that measure was the withdrawal of a portion of the labourers to other pursuits and occupations. The production, therefore, fell off. But the demand for the article produced continued, and was increasing. Whence, then, was that demand to be thereafter supplied, if not from those differently situated

proprietors whose means of labour continued, and who had opportunity of adding to them to any extent expedient or necessary? The duty, amounting to a prohibition, was the only obstacle: that removed, the result was plain—and it as plainly was the one that might have been predicted from the beginning.

The argument would be incomplete, were notice not taken of the fact that there is, in the very nature of cane-cultivation and sugar-making in the tropics, something which places the agriculturist or manufacturer, who is imperfectly supplied with workpeople, or who has an imperfect control over them, at a peculiar disadvantage, when he is called on to compete with such proprietors as can command a sufficient amount of labour at the time it is required. The planting season and crop-time are the two periods of the year in which the farmer and sugar-maker, within the tropics, require special aid. It is literally true that, at these seasons, he can scarcely have too many labourers. At other times he may compensate for the want of labour in one point of his operations, by drawing it from another; but, during the seasons of planting and of sugar-making, he cannot proceed with too great rapidity. Hence it is that, in Cuba and Porto Rico, when cane-cutting is once commenced, it and the consequent operations in the boiling-house are carried on without intermission, till the whole crop is secured and manufactured into sugar—the slaves working in relays or gangs, each for about six hours at a time. Great advantages are thus secured as regards quantity and

quality of production, and economy of working. The canes are cut at the proper time. No time is lost in securing all the juice that can be extracted from them by the mill; and, the latter being kept continuously going, there is not only a plentiful stream of liquor for the operations of the boiling-house, but (and perhaps this is one of the greatest advantages of getting over "crop time" as speedily as possible) the conduits are not allowed to run dry, and perchance to "sour," to the injury of the whole manufacture, or of a considerable part of it.

But, from the cause already assigned—from the diminution in the number of the labourers for the cane-field, or for the mill and boiling-house—such desirable rapidity and continuity of operations is not generally practicable in the British plantations. This position could be illustrated by the mention of many very strong instances of injury and expense, resulting from the operations being delayed through the deficiency of labour or the difficulty in getting the Negroes to work. I prefer, however, narrating an illustrative incident, which occurred under my own observation: it is a case somewhat in point; and if it wants the power of being an extreme case, it has at least the claim of being fact, *meipso teste*.

When riding in the island of Antigua with my friend Mr Martin, he observed that the windmill on one of his estates had suddenly ceased to revolve. On inquiry at the sugar-works, it was ascertained that the cause of cessation was a deficiency in the supply

of canes. Aware that, if his arrangements had been duly carried out, this should not have occurred, Mr Martin immediately proceeded to the cane-field, at which the reapers, or rather "cutters," were at work. There he learned the nature of the obstacle which was thus interrupting the proceedings at the mill; while I was not a little interested, and somewhat amused, by the discussion which ensued between my friend and the Negro overseer, relative to the subject which had brought us to the field. Like the other proprietors in the island, Mr Martin had succeeded in getting the wages of the field labourers reduced to about three-fourths of what they had been during the preceding year. But, during crop-time of that preceding year, Sambo had been in use to cut four loads of canes each working day, and his reasoning now was, that, as his wages had been reduced one-fourth, it was right and fair that his work should diminish in an equal ratio—a position to which he stuck with no little pertinacity, and defended with no little ingenuity. Intimately acquainted with Negro character, the intelligent proprietor of the estate gratified the "Negro love for talk with massa," by arguing with his people on the unreasonableness of supposing that, while "slave competition" compelled him to lower wages one-fourth, the reduction would benefit either him or them, if the work done was lessened to an equal extent; and his argument (coupled with promise of additional pay for extra work beyond the *four* loads,) produced the desired result, and enabled the operations of the

mill and of the boiling-house to be immediately resumed.

Apart, therefore, from the question of wages, (which is a very obvious one,) the free cultivator of the British possessions in the West Indian Archipelago labours under a disadvantage in conducting his operations, as compared with the slave cultivator of Cuba, Porto Rico, or Brazil.

But not to exhaust the patience of the reader, or to allow this Chapter to extend beyond proper and prescribed limits, I must now hasten to a conclusion, by devoting a few pages to the consideration of the remedies that ought to be, or that may be, applied towards the alleviation or the removal of West Indian distress. To prevent misconception, the remarks to be made on this important branch of the subject are prefaced with the two following observations:—In the first place, it were only prejudice to deny that the question is one which is attended with many and serious difficulties. *Audi alteram partem* is a principle of wise legislation, as well as of judicial procedure; and, amid the conflicting claims created by the multiplied ramifications of British commerce and British interests, it is no easy matter for the legislature to determine what course to pursue for the attainment of the desired end—even after the conclusion has been arrived at, that national faith with the West Indian proprietors has not been kept, that great injustice has been done them, and that they have been unfairly exposed to a ruinous competition, the final

issue of which is likely to defeat the very object for which it has been permitted. But though the road which leads to it be intricate and difficult, the end, when arrived at, is satisfactory and clear. Though it be true that here, as in most other cases of wrong and rectification, it has been easier to point to the injury than to the means or mode of cure, there are no parts of the observations recorded in this Chapter on this great national question, of the soundness of which a stronger opinion is entertained by the writer, than of those in which, in as few words as possible, he will now record the opinions to which his review of the subject has brought him, regarding the course to be pursued in order most effectually and permanently to cheapen the price of sugar; to do justice to the West Indian colonists; to resuscitate the British possessions in the Western Archipelago; and to suppress the slave trade and slavery all over the world.

In the second place, while the measures to be suggested, and to some extent advocated, are those which appear most obviously requisite for the realisation of the objects above stated, and while they admittedly involve the abnegation of the policy which dictated the legislation of 1846 and 1848 on the question of the sugar duties, it is not asserted either that there are no other measures of effectual and permanent relief, or that some means of alleviation may not be suggested, consistently even with the preservation, in its integrity, of the principle of the existing acts. No pretension is made to the promulgation, and much

less to the discovery, of a panacea for West Indian distress. The remedial measures to be suggested are advocated simply because, of many, they appear to the writer to be the most practicable, the most intermediate between extremes, and the most consistent with the true interests of the home consumer as well as of the colonial producer; and even should the legislature, in its wisdom, resolve to adhere to the principle of the existing statutes, there are yet, in such measures as an extension of the period of their application, and the introduction of a third and lower scale of duty for the importation of a third and lower description of colonial sugar, and the allowing the use of molasses as well as of sugar in distilleries and breweries, (to the improvement of spirits and malt liquors, and the cheapening of bread,)—means whereby much may be done to ward off and procrastinate, if they do not prevent, the fatal issue of those measures which have so prostrated the British West Indian colonies. Moreover, there is not merely a possibility, but even a probability, of some event ere long occurring which may bring suddenly to a termination—perhaps to a bloody one—the existence of slavery in the colonial dependencies of Spain in the West Indian Archipelago. The conspiracy at Matanzas, (in Cuba,) of 1844, is pregnant with important lessons; and the chances of repetition of some such tragedy, with the important difference of an opposite result, will not be lost sight of by the student of British West Indian interests, or indeed by any one desirous of taking, on



this really momentous question, a view as removed from despondence or despair on the one side, as from ill-founded expectation or credulity on the other.

Introduced and qualified by these preliminary observations, the following are advocated as the measures most practicable, and most likely to be available, for the permanent removal of the distress which now extends its depressing influences over the British possessions in the West Indies.

If I have been correct in affirming that there is at present, in these colonies, a retrograde movement, as regards prosperity, culture, and civilisation, then assuredly must I also be right in asserting, that the first and the most obvious measure to arrest the back-going, is an immediate resolution to extend the duration of the differential duties. But if, on the other hand, there be soundness in the view, that the cause of depression and retrogression is one which is remediable, then as certainly may the period of extension be limited to the time necessary for the effectual carrying out of those means in the use of which a sufficient cure is to be found. Combining these principles, the result arrived at is, that an extension of the protective duty for ten years longer would, if accompanied by other measures, suffice, not only to alleviate West Indian distress, but to remove the causes of it.

That there was justice in, or necessity for, a differential duty in favour of British colonial sugar, was conceded in 1846 by many even of that body in this

country who arrogate to themselves the title of "the Free-trade party;" and the statutes now in operation are in part framed in accordance with that admission. But, if this justice or necessity existed in 1846 or 1848, can it be with truth affirmed that it does not exist in 1850? Matters certainly have not improved in the British colonies in the Western seas, within the last four years. On the contrary, and in many respects, they have deteriorated. They have retrograded with a rapidity which is most appalling to those best acquainted with West Indian affairs; nay, this backgoing now threatens to engulf interests which in 1846 seemed remote from its operations. Nor can matters improve in the British colonies in the Western Archipelago until,

In the next place, the amount of the differential duty between slave-grown and free-grown *sugar* is increased to about 12s. per cwt. This, no doubt, involves a change both in the amount and on the basis of the protective duty. But a change on both seems expedient, if not essential. As regards amount, it appears plain that, if there is to be any protective duty at all, it cannot wisely be made less than that which will be sufficient—sufficient to stimulate to an increase in colonial production. Now, the result of all the consideration I have been able to give this subject is, that, looking to matters as they are, a smaller differential duty than 12s. would not secure the wished-for result. Any smaller increase would not suffice for protection to British interests, while it

might stimulate to increased exertion on the part of foreigners, to retain the vantage ground they now occupy in the British market. The details which go to the formation of this opinion are to be found in the preceding remarks on the comparative cheapness of slave-grown over free-grown commodities, and the relative superiority in value of slave-produced over free-produced sugars: a repetition of these is unnecessary. Aware of the objections to changing the principle of the differential duty, and altering it as now proposed, the above-stated position is maintained in a full knowledge of the argument, that such change would tend to encourage smuggling; and it is so mainly on the ground that the maintenance of a clear distinction, between slave and free produce, is the most powerful weapon philanthropy can wield; and that the risk of occasional, or even of frequent cases of evasion, does not furnish a sufficient reason for departing from that grand line of beneficent policy on which Great Britain first ventured, when in 1807 she passed the world-renowned act of abolition — that statute which struck the first blow for liberating the slave from his fetters, and in furtherance of which our noble country has since made such lavish expenditure of treasure and blood.

If the grounds upon which an increase of the differential duty is advocated, do not sufficiently appear from what has been already written, as to the deficiency of the means of labour in the British West Indies, the con-

sequent comparative cheapness of slave over free labour cultivation, the reasons why these causes are more operative in the tropics than they would be in more northern climes, and the admissions of the slaveholders themselves as to the nature and extent of the advantages they enjoy,—repetition here would not avail to make them more apparent or convincing. The amount stated is required, and it seems the lowest that would suffice ; while it would not, or at least would not necessarily, (for, in all matters involving a change in the rate of a duty, while necessary results may be calculated, actual ones are beyond our reach,) involve an increase in the price of sugar to the consumer greater than would be caused by a very moderate enhancement of the present price. When it is kept in view that the object of submitting to some such temporary advance is the maintenance of national faith, and the alleviation of West Indian distress, and the preservation of these colonies—not only as colonies, but as sugar-supplying countries—it will surely not be thought by any one that the object in view is unworthy of the sacrifice, if a sacrifice it can be called. I have said temporary advance, for it is not contemplated that such differential duty should be permanent : on the principles already at some length adverted to, it is unnecessary that it should be so.

If to the measures above indicated there were added a vigorous, well-directed effort to promote immigration of free labourers from the shores of Africa, such innigation would redeem something like a national obligation ; and under its ameliorating

influences, the British West Indian possessions would, ere the expiry of the proposed protective period, be in a situation to compete with any sugar-producing country in the world. This would be the case even were the abolition of slavery, in the territories of Spain and of Brazil, indefinitely protracted or hopelessly postponed. Let the person who questions the accuracy of this opinion, inquire why it is that the island of Barbadoes is in so different a position from that of her sister colonies—why it is that Colonel Reid, in his graphic, truth-telling description, makes special exception of “Little England” when writing of the Windward group? It is not said that free labour in the tropics is as cheap as slave labour, in all respects, or as regards every particular; but it is said that the difference is not so great as to place the slave-owner on an unapproachable vantage ground—provided always the supply of the one kind be as plentiful as that of the other: and in evidence of this Barbadoes is referred to, in exclusion of further argument.

The question of African immigration—the *modus operandi*—the appliances for conducting it—or the national guarantees which ought to form the basis of it—involve questions too important and too extensive to be here discussed. Much has lately been written upon them; and it is not supposed that it will now be disputed, by any one who has given attention to the subject, that, while Africa is the field to which the West Indians naturally look for a supply of labourers, a system of free immigration from that

vast continent to the British colonies in the Western Archipelago—conducted under the guarantec of Britain's good faith—would confer a great boon, as well on the Africans so conveyed from the one land to the other, as on the tropical agriculturist who might afterwards employ them.

But while my space compels me to omit the evidence \* which relates to the practicability, philanthropy, and efficiency of emigration from Africa, as a means of cure for the evils affecting the labour market in the British West Indies, I can, as the result of personal observation, vouch for the cordiality of the reception which such emigrants would receive, were they provided with the means of so transporting themselves. Being in one of the Leeward Islands in 1849, when a vessel arrived having a number of African labourers on board, an opportunity was afforded me of observing both the anxiety of the planters to secure their services, and the attention given to the promotion of their health and comfort. These people very speedily adapted themselves to the peaceful occupations of their new homes, in a congenial clime. Many months afterwards I was rejoiced to learn, from one of the most influential planters in the island, that these emigrant labourers were amongst the best workpeople which the colony at the time contained.

\* The reader will find a judicious exposition of the evidence on this subject in a pamphlet entitled, *Effects of an Alteration in the Sugar Duties, &c.*, by my friend Mr M'Gregor Laird. London: 1844. Effingham Wilson.

But whence, it may be asked, are the pecuniary means for this emigration to come? The financial is always the most difficult part of every truly practical question. But while it is very difficult, that very fact makes it very important; the preceding observations, therefore, would be defective, were they not fittingly terminated by some remarks on the monetary branch of the present inquiry.

There are two sources whence the national part of the expense of African emigration might be provided: these are—the sums now annually expended on the slave squadron, and the balance of the compensation money. Some, even among those who have considered the question, and who may otherwise be favourably disposed to the adoption of the writer's views, will hesitate to acknowledge any acquiescence in this opinion; but it is conceived that a few sentences will suffice to prove both its justice and its expediency.

The squadron for the prevention of the slave trade, while it is the last remaining, so it is the most emphatic of Great Britain's numerous manifestations of her detestation of slavery. It may then be naturally enough asked how, and with what consistency, a writer who advocates a return to measures that tend to repress slave production, can advocate the abandonment of one to which such an observation applies. Now I apprehend that a sufficient answer to this argument is to be found in discriminating between measures effectual and measures ineffectual; and between the slave squadron as an auxiliary measure—while

British legislation was otherwise consistent with its existence—and that squadron as a preventive check, standing by itself, when the scope and policy of English legislation on the sugar question has been entirely changed. So long as England discountenanced production by means of slaves, there was consistency in attempting to prevent other countries getting slaves wherewith to cultivate their lands. But consistency and entireness of policy was lost, when the statute of 1846 passed into a law. Thereafter we have been holding out a bonus on slave production, while, by the preventive squadron, we have been trying to counteract the effect of the temptation. To illustrate the argument by a parallel case, there was a time when British legislation prevented the emigration of the artisan; and then, consistently enough, it also prohibited the exportation of certain kinds of machinery which the artisan made. The first branch of this consistent system of unwise law was first abrogated, and in a brief space it became evident, that the sooner the second branch of it was wiped out of the statute book the better. So it is with the laws relative to slaves and slave produce. As long as we discountenanced and refused the latter, so long could we consistently, and with hope of success, interfere by treaty and preventive squadrons, to put a stop to the former; but when the bill of 1846 became a law, the consistency of the national policy departed with the system which it displaced.

Again, the argument for or against the maintenance



of the slave squadron on the African coast, hangs entirely on the question of efficiency or non-efficiency. An inefficient check only aggravates the evil it is intended to prevent ; and in the case of the slave trade, the aggravation becomes doubly deplorable from the excessive sacrifice of human life which is one of its effects. Before the slave trade was declared to be piracy—when it was a legal thing for the white savage to rob and sell his fellow-men—the mortality of the “middle passage” was greatly less than it has been since that event. At all times the slave trade has been productive of an appalling waste of human life. Anterior to the attempt to suppress it by treaty and by squadron, the mortality was from 10 to 15 per cent of the numbers shipped ; it has since risen to 33 per cent—the harrowing increase being caused by the crowding of the miserable cargo on board vessels built small, low, and narrow, and with little regard to anything save their sailing powers. The fact that it has been productive of this consequence, is in itself sufficient to prove the insufficiency of the “blockading check.” But its inefficiency is a matter of notoriety, and even now it is being brought prominently before the attention of the British public and legislature, in the petitions presented to Parliament by Jamaica, St Kitt’s, and others of our West Indian Colonies. But is it possible to make this check an efficacious one ? There are many who maintain that it is not, and, in a word, I confess myself a reluctant convert to that opinion. Looking to the fact that a blockade of the African

coast, to be effectual for the suppression of the slave trade, must extend for a length of 6000 miles and more, it does seem to be visionary to expect the suppression of the traffic in human flesh simply by the presence, on the African coast, of a naval armament—and that particularly now, when, by our own great demand for slave-produced sugar, molasses, and rum, we are presenting a continuously operative inducement to encounter the hazard of the middle passage, and run the gauntlet through our ships of war. No doubt something—nay much—might be done by giving to the courts of mixed commission greater authority and more extended power; but it seems the teaching of a dear-bought experience that, with all appliances, we need not hope that, by slave treaties and slave squadrons *alone*, we will ever succeed in effectually putting an end to the multiplied horrors of that greatest production of

“Man’s inhumanity to man,”

the accursed slave trade.

Such are some of the grounds upon which the withdrawal of the slave squadron, and the appropriation for a few years of its annual costs to the promotion of free immigration into the British West Indian colonies from the continent of Africa, is placed prominently among the measures for the removal of West Indian depression and distress. Be it remembered, that the withdrawal of this hitherto notoriously inefficient preventive measure, is only advocated in connexion with the re-establishment of a less costly,

but infinitely more effectual one; and were the squadron removed, there could not surely be a wiser or a more appropriate application of the moneys thereby saved, than to the adoption of a measure which will retain our own sugar-producing colonies, and eventually tend to that state of things under which it can alone be truly said, "that free-labour is as cheap as slave-labour." So soon as that issue is arrived at, then, and not till then, (unless some unforeseen contingency occur,) will the time arrive when cultivation by means of slaves will be abandoned as an unnecessary, because a profitless, violation of the rights of man.

But, apart from the above-stated method of providing the means for enabling the British colonists successfully to compete with the subjects or colonists of those countries where slave cultivation is legalised and encouraged, there is the other source of provision—viz., the balance of the compensation money. In a former part of this Chapter the fact was referred to, that, of the £20,000,000 promised, only £18,669,401, 10s. 7d. has been yet paid. The remaining £1,330,598, 9s. 5d. yet stands as an unexpended balance. There are difficulties in the way of appropriating this sum, or any part of it, to a purpose different from—though collateral to—that for which it was originally designed, but there are no such difficulties as cannot be overcome by a British statute.

Having now detained my reader longer on this subject than I originally either desired or intended, I

now take leave of it, with the concluding observation, that if the results, which time only can develop, should go to falsify any or all of the preceding observations, in so far as they are prophetic of evil to the British colonial possessions in the West Indian Archipelago, no one will more heartily rejoice in that issue than will the writer, who has committed such prognostications to the press. A sense of expediency, as well as of justice, has been his guide in making his remarks ; and if they do not appear to others so conclusive as they seem to himself, he can only say, in language before used, by other and abler writers,

“What is writ is writ, would it were worthier.”

## APPENDIX TO VOL. I.

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### A

DANISH EMANCIPATION ACT OF 3<sup>d</sup> JULY 1848.

JEG

PETER CARL FREDERIK V. SCHOLTEN

*Gör villerligt :*

1. Alle Ufrie paa de danske vestindiske Öer ere fra Dags Dato frigivne.

2. Negerne paa Plantagerne beholde i 3 Maaneder fra Dato Brugen af de Huse og Provisionsgrunde, hvoraf de nu ere i Besiddelse.

3. Arbeide betales for Fremtiden efter Overeenskomst, hvorimod Allowance ophører.

4. Underholdningen af Gamle og Svage, som ere ude af Stand til at arbeide, afholdes indtil nærmere Bestemmelse af deres forrige Eiere.

Givet under General Gouvernementets Segl og min Haand.

General Gouvernementet over de danske vestindiske Öer, St Croix den 3die Juli 1848.

(L. S.)

P. v. SCHOLTEN.

[TRANSLATION.]

I

PETER CHARLES FREDERICK V. SCHOLTEN

*Maketh known :*

1. All Unfree in the Danish West India Islands are from to-day emancipated.

2. The Estate Negroes retain, for three months from date, the use of the houses and provision-grounds, of which they have hitherto been possessed.

3. Labour is in future to be paid for by agreement, but allowance is to cease.

4. The maintenance of old and infirm, who are not able to work, is, until farther determination, to be furnished by the late owners.

Given under the General Government's Seal and my Hand.

General Government of the Danish West India Islands, St Croix, the 3d July 1848.

(L. S.)

P. v. SCHOLTEN.

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## B

Translation of the PROVISIONAL ACT to regulate the relations between the Proprietors of Landed Estates and the Rural Population of Free Labourers.

I, PETER HANSEN, Knight Commander of the Order of Dannebrog, the King's Commissioner for and officiating Governor-General of the Danish West Indian Islands,

MAKE KNOWN : That whereas the Ordinance dated 29th July 1848, by which yearly contracts for labour on landed estates were introduced, has not been duly acted upon ; whereas the interest of the proprietors of estates, as well as of the labourers, requires that their mutual obligations should be defined ; and whereas, on inquiry into the practice of the island, and into the private contracts and agreements hitherto made, it appears expedient to establish uniform rules throughout the island for the guidance of all parties concerned, It is enacted and ordained :

*Para. 1.* All engagements of labourers now domiciled on landed estates and receiving wages in money, or in kind, for cultivating and working such estates, are to be continued as directed by the ordinance of 29th July 1848 until the first day of October of the present year ; and all similar engagements shall in future be made, or shall be considered as

having been made, for a term of twelve months, viz: from the first of October till the first of October, year after year.

Engagements made by heads of families are to include their children between five and fifteen years of age, and other relatives depending on them and staying with them.

*Para. 2.* No labourer engaged as aforesaid in the cultivation of the soil, shall be discharged or dismissed from, nor shall be permitted to dissolve, his or her engagement before the expiration of the same on the first of October of the present, or of any following year, except in the instances hereafter enumerated :

*A.* By mutual agreement of master and labourer before a Magistrate.

*B.* By order of a Magistrate, on just and equitable cause being shown by the parties interested.

Legal marriage, and the natural tie between mothers and their children, shall be deemed by the Magistrate just and legal cause of removal from one estate to another. The husband shall have the right to be removed to his wife, the wife to her husband, and children under fifteen years of age to their mother, provided no objection to employing such individuals shall be made by the owner of the estate to which the removal is to take place.

*Para. 3.* No engagement of a labourer shall be lawful in future unless made in the presence of witnesses and entered in the day-book of the estate.

*Para. 4.* Notice to quit service shall be given by the employer, as well as by the labourer, at no other period but once a-year in the month of August, not before the first, nor after the last day of the said month. An entry thereof shall be made in the day-book, and an acknowledgement in writing shall be given to the labourer.

The labourer shall have given, or received, legal notice of removal from the estate where he serves, before any one can engage his services. Otherwise the new contract to be void, and the party engaging or tampering with a labourer employed by others will be dealt with according to law.

In case any owner or manager of an estate should dismiss a labourer during the year without sufficient cause, or should refuse to receive him at the time stipulated, or refuse to grant him a passport when due notice of removal has been given, the

owner or the manager is to pay full damages to the labourer, and to be sentenced to a fine not exceeding twenty dollars.

*Para. 5.* Labourers employed or rated as first, second, or third class labourers, shall perform all the work in the field or about the works, or otherwise concerning the estate, which it hitherto has been customary for such labourers to perform, according to the season. They shall attend faithfully to their work, and willingly obey the directions given by the employer or the person appointed by him. No labourer shall presume to dictate what work he, or she, is to do, or refuse the work he may be ordered to perform, unless expressly engaged for some particular work only. If a labourer thinks himself aggrieved, he shall not therefore leave the work, but in due time apply for redress to the owner of the estate, or to the Magistrate.

It is the duty of all labourers on all occasions and at all times to protect the property of his employer, to prevent mischief to the estate, to apprehend evil-doers, and not to give countenance to or conceal unlawful practices.

*Para. 6.* The working days to be as usual, only five days in the week, and the same days as hitherto. The ordinary work of estates is to commence at sunrise and to be finished at sunset every day, leaving one hour for breakfast, and two hours at noon, from twelve to two o'clock.

Planters who prefer to begin the work at seven o'clock in the morning, making no separate breakfast time, are at liberty to adopt this plan, either during the year, or when out of crop.

The labourers shall be present in due time at the place where they are to work. The list to be called and answered regularly ; whoever does not answer the list when called, is too late.

*Para. 7.* No throwing of grass, or of wood, shall be exacted during extra hours, all former agreements to the contrary notwithstanding ; but during crop the labourers are expected to bring home a bundle of longtops from the field where they are at work.

Cartmen and crookpeople when breaking off, shall attend properly to their stock as hitherto usual.

*Para. 8.* During crop the mill gang, the crook gang, boiler-men, firemen, still-men, and any other person employed about



the mill and the boiling-house, shall continue their work during breakfast and noon hours, as hitherto usual ; and the boilermen, firemen, magass carriers, &c., also during evening hours after sunset, when required ; but all workmen employed as aforesaid shall be paid as extra remuneration for the work done by them in extra hours.

The boiling-house is to be cleared, the mill to be washed down and the magass to be swept up, before the labourers leave the work, as hitherto usual.

The mill is not to turn after six o'clock in the evening, and the boiling not to be continued after ten o'clock, except by special permission of the Governor-General, who then will determine if any, and what extra remuneration shall be paid to the labourers.

*Para. 9.* The labourers are to receive, until otherwise ordered, the following remuneration :

*A.* The use of a house, or dwelling-rooms for themselves and their children, to be built and repaired by the estate, but to be kept in proper order by the labourers.

*B.* The use of a piece of provision ground, thirty feet in square as usual, for every first and second class labourer ; or if it be standing ground up to fifty feet in square. Third class labourers are not entitled to, but may be allowed some provision ground.

*C.* Weekly wages at the rate of fifteen cents to every first class labourer, of ten cents to every second class labourer, and of five cents to every third class labourer, for every working day.

Where the usual allowance of meal and herrings has been agreed on in part of wages, full weekly allowance shall be taken for five cents a-day, or twenty-five cents a-week.

Nurses losing two hours every working day shall be paid at the rate of four full working days in the week.

The wages of minors to be paid as usual to their parents, or to the person in charge of them.

Labourers not calling at pay-time personally, or by another authorised, to wait till next pay-day, unless they were prevented by working for the estate.

No attachment of wages for private debts to be allowed, nor more than two-thirds to be deducted for debts to the estate, unless otherwise ordered by the magistrate.

Extra provisions occasionally given during the ordinary

working hours are not to be claimed as a right, nor to be bargained for.

*Para. 10.* Work in extra hours during crop is to be paid as follows ;—

To the mill gang and to the crook gang for working through the breakfast hour one stiver, and working through noon two stivers per day.

Extra provision is not to be given, except at the option of the labourers, in place of the money or in part of it.

The boilermen, firemen, and magass carriers are to receive for all days, when the boiling is carried on until late hours, a maximum pay of twenty (20) cents per day. No bargaining for extra pay by the hour is permitted.

Labourers working such extra hours only by turns are not to have additional payment.

*Para. 11.* Tradesmen on estates are considered as engaged to perform the same work as hitherto usual, assisting in the field, carting, potting sugar, &c. They shall be rated as first, second, and third class labourers, according to their proficiency. Where no definite terms have been agreed on previously, the wages of first class tradesmen, having full work in their trade, are to be twenty (20) cents per day. Any existing contract with tradesmen is to continue until October next.

No tradesman is allowed to keep apprentices without the consent of the owner of the estate. Such apprentices to be bound for no less period than three years, and not to be removed without the permission of the magistrate.

*Para. 12.* No labourer is obliged to work for others on Saturdays, but if they chose to work for hire, it is proper that they should give their own estate the preference. For a full day's work on Saturday there shall not be asked for nor given more than :—

Twenty [20] cents to a first-class labourer.

Thirteen (13) cents to a second-class labourer.

Seven (7) cents to a third-class labourer.

Work on Saturday may however be ordered by the magistrate as a punishment to the labourer, for having absented himself from work during the week for one whole day or more, and for having been idle during the week ; and then the labourer shall not receive more than his usual pay for a common day's work.

*Para. 13.* All the male labourers, tradesmen included, above eighteen years of age, working on an estate, are bound to take the usual night-watch by turns, but only once in ten days. Notice to be given before noon to break off from work in the afternoon with the nurses, and to come to work next day at 8 o'clock. The watch to be delivered in the usual manner by nightfall and by sunrise.

The above rule shall not be compulsory, except where voluntary watchmen cannot be obtained at a hire the planters may be willing to give, to save the time lost by employing their ordinary labourers as watchmen.

Likewise the male labourers are bound, once a-month, on Sundays and holidays, to take the day-watch about the yard, and to act as pasture-men, on receiving their usual pay for a week-day's work. This rule applies also to the crook-boys.

All orders about the watches to be duly entered in the day-book of the estate.

Should a labourer, having been duly warned to take the watch, not attend, another labourer is to be hired in the place of the absentee and at his expense, not however to exceed fifteen cents. The person who wilfully leaves the watch or neglects it, is to be reported to the magistrate and punished as the cause merits.

*Para. 14.* Labourers wilfully abstaining from work on a working day are to forfeit their wages for the day, and will have to pay over and above the forfeit a fine, which can be lawfully deducted in their wages, of seven (7) cents for a first class labourer, five (5) cents for a second class labourer, and two (2) cents for a third class labourer.

In crop, on grinding days, when employed about the works, in cutting canes or in crook, an additional punishment will be awarded for wilful absence and neglect by the magistrate, on complaint being made.

Labourers abstaining from work for half a day, or breaking off from work before being dismissed, to forfeit their wages for one day.

Labourers not coming to work in due time to forfeit half a day's wages.

Parents keeping their children from work shall be fined instead of the children.

No charge of house-rent is to be made in future on account of absence from work, or for the Saturday.

*Para. 15.* Labourers wilfully abstaining from work for two or three days during the week, or habitually absenting themselves, or working badly and lazily, shall be punished as the case merits, on complaint to the magistrate.

*Para. 16.* Labourers assaulting any person in authority on the estate, or planning and conspiring to retard, or to stop, the work of the estate, or uniting to abstain from work, or to break their engagements, shall be punished according to law on investigation before a magistrate.

*Para. 17.* Until measures can be adopted for securing medical attendance to the labourers, and for regulating the treatment of the sick and the infirm, it is ordered :

That infirm persons, unfit for any work, shall as hitherto be maintained on the estates where they are domiciled, and be attended to by the next relations.

That parents or children of such infirm persons shall not remove from the estate, leaving them behind, without making provision for them to the satisfaction of the owner, or of the magistrate.

That labourers unable to attend to work on account of illness, or on account of having sick children, shall make a report to the manager, or any other person in authority on the estate, who, if the case appears dangerous, and the sick person destitute, shall cause medical assistance to be given.

That all sick labourers, willing to remain in the hospital during their illness, shall there be attended to at the cost of the estate.

*Para. 18.* If a labourer reported sick, shall be at any time found absent from the estate without leave, or is trespassing about the estate, or found occupied with work requiring health, he shall be considered skulking and wilfully absent from work.

When a labourer pretends illness, and is not apparently sick, it shall be his duty to prove his illness by medical certificate.

*Para. 19.* Pregnant women shall be at liberty to work with the small gang as customary, and when confined not to be called on to work for seven weeks after their confinement.

Young children shall be fed and attended to during the hours of work at some proper place, at the cost of the estate.

Nobody is allowed to stay from work on pretence of attending a sick person, except the wife and the mother, in dangerous cases of illness.

*Para. 20.* It is the duty of the managers to report to the police any contagious or suspicious cases of illness and death ; especially when gross neglect is believed to have taken place, or when children have been neglected by their mothers, in order that the guilty person may be punished according to law.

*Para. 21.* The driver or foreman on the estate is to receive in wages four and a half dollars monthly, if no other terms have been agreed on. The driver may be dismissed at any time during the year with the consent of the magistrate. It is the duty of the driver to see the work duly performed, to maintain order and peace on the estate, during the work and at other times, and to prevent and report all offences committed. Should any labourer insult, or use insulting language towards him during, or on account of, the performance of his duties, such person is to be punished according to law.

*Para. 22.* No labourer is allowed, without the special permission of the owner or manager, to appropriate wood, grass, vegetables, fruits and the like, belonging to the estate, nor to appropriate such produce from other estates, nor to cut canes, or to burn charcoal. Persons making themselves guilty of such offences shall be punished according to law, with fines or imprisonment with hard labour ; and the possession of such articles not satisfactorily accounted for, shall be sufficient evidence of unlawful acquisition.

*Para. 23.* All agreements contrary to the above rules are to be null and void, and owners and managers of estates convicted of any practice tending wilfully to counteract, or avoid, these rules by direct or indirect means, shall be subject to a fine not exceeding 200 dollars.

Government House, St Croix, 26th January 1849.

P. HANSEN.

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